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"THE COAL TOWS ARE THE HEAVY CHORDS IN THE  
LIFE-MUSIC OF THE GREAT RIVER."

# ON THE OHIO

BY  
H. BENNETT ABDY

ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY ROWENA MEEKS ABDY—THE "PAINTER LADY"—  
FROM SKETCHES, ETC., MADE DURING THE VOYAGE



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BEING A LOVING TRIBUTE  
TO  
“UNCLE SAM”  
FROM  
ONE OF HIS ADOPTED “NEPHEWS,”  
AN ENGLISH BOY-IMMIGRANT



## INTRODUCTION

As originally planned by the party's pathfinder, our 'cross continent steamboat voyage was to have begun at the eastern edge of Kansas and to have ended in western Pennsylvania.

It was to be made in three phases: the first was to comprise four hundred and ten miles down the Missouri; the next, two hundred miles or so down the Mississippi to Cairo; and the third one was to cover one thousand and fifty miles up the Ohio, from its mouth at Cairo to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania—over sixteen hundred miles! Sixteen hundred and sixty miles of "Life on the Mississippi" experiences.

I say we planned, but alas for man-made plans! We "reckoned without our hosts"—of Exposition visitors from San Francisco who, during September, 1915, were eastward bound. To the aforementioned hosts must be ascribed the failure to commence our voyaging at Kansas City. Travel-choked railways at the western end robbed us of our whole Missouri voyage by causing us to miss the every-ten-day packet from the Kansas metropolis to St. Louis. So also did a fog-smothered river at the eastern end of our water journey rob



## INTRODUCTION

us of a hundred-mile section of the Ohio. For those who have the time and taste for the long river voyage, the steamboat's easy and leisurely progress is delightful. By taking this river route, one can avoid fully one-half of the more or less fatiguing transcontinental railway journey between San Francisco and New York and *vice versa*.

City-worn nerves and souls would find solace and renewed strength in such a journey—and then, just think what one can learn about one's country!

The student of things American, be it history, transportation, art, literature, or simply "folks," will find on our great rivers a vast and fascinating amount of data, interest and amusement.

## PREFACE

To those skilful, patient and genial steamboat men of the Ohio, and to my wife, the "Painter Lady" of this book, I wish to express my grateful thanks.

To the former I am indebted for valuable material in the form of stories, tales and yarns; to the latter for her helpfulness in keen yet kindly criticism as each finished chapter was read to her. Add to this a jolly typist who, when not in tiny gales of laughter at the funny parts of the story, was a rhetorician who frowned sternly on my occasional transgression of some finely drawn rule or soul-chilling regulation.

And, in conclusion, I would like to explain to the river-men that the names of several boats and individuals have been changed—for obvious reasons. Also, incidents which happened on several boats at many different places on the river have, sometimes, for artistic and romantic effect been given to one or ascribed to a single person. The author wished to get the *spirit* of yourselves and your wonderful river life and give it out to millions of our fellow-countrymen, whose lives are spent so far from the great mid-continental rivers that they know of you and your streams only in

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a vague, uncertain way through stories of Yesterday. By such this modest effort may be welcomed as a traveller coming to their fireside with tales of the sights and sounds on the Ohio to-day.

THE AUTHOR.

San Juan Bautista  
California

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## ON THE OHIO

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# ON THE OHIO

## CHAPTER I

### *The Missouri—by Rail!*

Introducing Ourselves—St. Louis—Shipping Time on the Levee—Eads Bridge.

WE were three San Franciscans—two were painters and will be referred to, usually, as the Painter Lady and the Painter Man. The third member of the party will be inflicted with two sobriquets and a “nickname”—Pathfinder, Chronicler, and “Billabdy”; the latter being a “play” on his real name by the Painter Man.

Having missed the boat, as already explained, we decided to see all we could of the Missouri *by rail*. From Kansas City the river makes a long, swinging bend in a general northeasterly direction; so, by taking the express-train route of the Missouri Pacific between the Kansas town and St. Louis, we “cut across-lots,” as it were, behind the bend.

In an hour or two we shot down a long gully and then out onto a beautiful bench of land some

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fifty feet above the yellow waters of the broad Missouri.

What an enormous volume of swirling waters! Yet, somehow, that big, lonely, steamerless stream, with its swiftly moving current of *mud-thinned-with-water*, did not seem to be a real river—a humanized river, so to speak, but rather a Something that overawed the spectator. One had a sense of gazing upon a rushing desolation of wild, muddy floods carrying away the third of a continent.

The express speeds swiftly onward. As we sweep around a bold tree-covered bend, a city comes into view—spires, towers; houses climbing up the terraced face of the bluff that slopes back from the crest of the cliffs—a great temple-like block of architecture on the utmost summit. Then other houses, churches, towers and terraces, all finally crowned by the temple's lordly dome—the dome of the new State Capitol. The place is Jefferson City, the quite picturesquely situated capital of Missouri.

On our way again. Our interest centres now on the turgid stream, flowing close below. It is so far across that one cannot always distinguish the long wooded islands from the mainland beyond. Now there are wide flood plains, tree covered or house dotted; then, high plateaux, from the trees of which upspring the spires of the

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churches, as some river town comes partially in view.

The southern bank of the great river is composed mostly of limestone cliffs; usually the wall of rock rises sharply from a mere fringe of foreshore, barely wide enough to carry two shining lines of single track. That narrow "bench" is all that the Missouri grudgingly grants for passage to its upstart rival of the railed way.

Now and then good-sized streams come down from the interior and, joining the main river, swing into line and roll with it down to the Gulf of Mexico. Below Jefferson City, Mother Missouri is joined by her big, bouncing daughter, the Osage; who, with a romping, swinging current, every bit as muddy as mother's, pushes out and buffets the waters of the larger stream quite saucily. Another tributary, the Gasconade, comes in, not so many miles below the muddy Osage, but its waters are green and clear; also it has a calm, "well-bred" dignity of current, like unto Shakespeare's Avon, where the latter saunters with aristocratic languor beneath the frowning battlements of Warwick Castle.

Gradually, as we reach the ever-widening waters of the lower Missouri, more and more little towns and villages grace the railway and the riverside; some of them are very picturesque, and *grace* is the word to describe them.

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The older villages were of the ante-bellum time, and showed a strong Southern influence. In them we saw soft, weathered, paintable colours; some of them had quaint balconies and Greek column effects from the fashions set in old Virginia and in the delightfully homelike Colonial houses of the Washington period.

One village—the name escaped us as our train shrieked through it—was very paintable. In it was a bridge with a single arch of stone, festooned with the matted vines of many a summer season; below this a pool and, on a huge boulder at its edge, dozed a blue-shirted man, fishing-rod in hand; just a few yards farther on, was a group of blue fishermen and a red-bloused small boy who fished more alertly from an old grey boat. On the knoll above stood a fine old home with wide verandas, great trees and a spacious lawn that sloped to the pool. It had the air of a kindly old Southern gentleman looking down upon (and indulgently permitting) the fishing at the foot of his grounds.

We were still rhapsodizing about the village when we became aware that the late September twilight was deepening into early darkness. The train swung away from the river—suburban homes and street-lights soon flashed by—then a street-car—buildings grew thicker and higher—we rattled over the countless switches with the sound of musketry—and—we were in St. Louis.

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Between the time of our arrival at the station and our peep at the water front, some two hours later, we had a bit of traveller's luck (?) that will colour our recollections of St. Louis for many, many "moons."

When we entered—but wait—this incident really had its foundation laid on the plains of Colorado. It was this way: Our Painter Man seemed unable to get, on the diner, a steak broiled to suit him.

"Just wait till I get to St. Louis," he was wont to threaten darkly, "then I will 'get on the outside' of a steak big enough to raft us down to Cairo—and drink enough beer to float it, too."

Our genial friend is a very Hercules in physique, and so "desperate" did he become that we were secretly relieved when our train kept speeding on across the cattle plains of Kansas. For we had feared that, should it stop at a water tank near a group of grazing kine, he would leap off, and, seizing some astonished steer by the horns, despatch it in the dramatic manner made so thrilling by the giant in "Quo Vadis."

So, when bathed, shaved and freshly dressed, we all met again in the lobby of our hotel, and the Painter Man boomed forth his suggestion of an hour's dalliance with broiled steaks and foaming steins, we were all of one accord.

Bribing a bellboy, whom our giant caught with a swoop of his arm, as the boy ran at large across

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a corridor, we directed him to show us to the grill.

Broiled steaks were ordered. They were to be broiled, too, in the most exacting San Francisco style!

After a cabaret dancer had done a dainty bit, the Pathfinder suggested a generous "stein." The headwaiter beamed at our signal and came to us. "Three steins," ordered the Pathfinder. The waiter's face fell as he repeated the order—he heaved a sigh from the very bottom of his boots—and, with an almost sobbed apology, his voice the while seemingly choked with grief, said:

"Awful sorry, sir, but this is Sunday."

"Yes, but this is also St. Louis, the source of perfect Niagaras of foaming beer," we chorused quite testily, albeit a chill of horror and foreboding ran through our souls.

"Yes, sir; true, sir"—edging away from the rising wrath of our Hercules and almost bursting into tears—"but the flow is dammed up on Sunday now."

A painful, staring silence; then:

"Well, we'd like to dam the dammers both *up* and down; bring coffee," we growled in deep disgust.

The steaks were served—broiled perfectly; but alas, it was a blighted meal and we munched through it in an almost solemn silence.

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On our departure, the headwaiter escorted us courteously to the door, expressing his regrets to the Pathfinder, who growled:

“That’s all right, you are not to blame—just tell us how to get to the riverfront, or—” with a sudden flare of sarcasm that made the man grin, “is *that* dammed up on Sundays, too?”

Early morning found us viewing the levee in the soft radiance of an “Indian summer” sun. The latter, though still low in the opalescent haze of the morning sky, gave sufficient warmth to soften the edge of a delightfully bracing touch of frost, while its brightness cheered into bits of laughter and bursts of song many a shivery roustabout as he began his day of toil.

We hurried back to our rolls and coffee just as gay and happy as children, for our morning view of the levee had promised well.

By eleven o’clock the levee and the river throbbed with life and action. Steamboats of many kinds—palatial, nondescript or grimy old freighters—ceaselessly churned the red-brown waters; others dozed dreamily at their wharfboats, while some hissed impatiently from their temperamental little steam pipes when leaving time was up and they should be going about their masters’ business.

Captains strive to leave terminal points on schedule time; when delayed, every minute and



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movement is tense with hurry and impatience. The roustabouts become affected by the hurry-strain, too, and urge any laggard of their number to his utmost speed by shouting: "Hell's a-hoppin', niggah—shake a laig!"

With jerky, stabbing motions of their pencils, the freight clerks and tallymen indicate to the darkies the pieces of freight that must be loaded next.

It is a scene of life and motion. Those black men would trot or stagger on board under various burdens, only to reappear a moment later mopping a kinky cranium; then off again on the run. They formed a sort of endless belt—a double line of hurrying humans. The "empties" rushing ashore to load up with packages, often congested, in their eagerness, into little swirls and eddies of beings that twisted and circled around the piles of freight.

Up and down that line of sweating darkies, a "gang-driver" leaped and barked like a yelping collie at the heels of cattle. The ceaseless movement of the bare or half-clad feet produced a curious undertone of "shuffle-shuffle, shiffle-shaff" that noticeably increased in "tempo" whenever the "driver" stopped for a moment at any part of the line. His tongue was seemingly barbed, and actually gifted with darky-prodding expletives; he was charged full of excoriations that stung—

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curses that burned—sarcasm that withered—aye, and even badinage that cajoled.

Surely that Human Whip must have been a descendant of some “Simon Legree”!

Yet, though evidently a “pastmaster” at his business, his *bark* was very much worse than his *bite*; for more ‘sheepish grins than signs of fear showed on the faces of those whom his tongue had lashed.

Ever and anon, the driver cocked up his eye for a sign of approval from the captain and pilot, who were standing on the upper deck gazing down in sizzling impatience because of the outraged schedule.

All this was happening as a proud and flauntily painted “Belle of the River” was about to sail. The Painter Man, famed for his sketches of figures-in-action, was having as tense a time as any one on the levee. He found keen enjoyment in the rapid strokes of his charcoal as it caught the action of that lifting, bending and truck-pushing line of ragged roustabouts.

Now and then a straggly string of belated passengers stumbled hurriedly down the cobblestoned levee; these would be promptly met, halfway, by coloured porters who would help, guide or respectfully “shoo” them safely on board.

This aid was necessary; for even the passenger gangway was now being used by a newly

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formed line of freight carriers in a last frenzied spurt to get it all aboard and be off. We rather suspected that the tardy passengers were thus mildly punished by being jostled as the roustabouts crowded past them.

Suddenly, a great bell clanged on board the steamboat; it quite startled the little Painter Lady, who nearly dropped her box of water colours, so intent had *she* become on making the colour notes of this stirring scene. Even while the last half-dozen package-laden darkies were still racing along the landing stage, an impatient order, bellowed by the mate, started the great plank creaking and straining into mid-air, and the last man had to quickly scamper down the steep slope of the rising stage like a frightened rabbit; he grinned broadly as he was shot aboard to the tune of much "jollyng" and laughter from the passengers who lined the rails of the upper decks.

Now came a fiercely spluttering and watery rasp of sound, presaging a hoarse hoot that boomed from the brazen throat of the enormous fog horn. The ponderous stern wheel began to slowly "flop-flop" as a curiously deliberate "chu-uf-uff" came from the tall, twin smokestacks. The "Belle of the Bends" was off!

At the landing place or wharfboat of some of the passenger packets, one finds huge bulletin boards, inscribed with large-lettered lists of the

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various ports of call. The names of many recall memories of Mark Twain, of Civil War battlefields and forts, and of Creole stories by George W. Cable; stories and songs about river life and steamboat racing in anti-bellum days, when Cotton was king, and Sugar his brown, sweet queen.

Steamboat names, too, were a source of interest and delight to us. "Erastus Wells" and "Belle of the Bends" were a likely couple, while "Grey Eagle" and "Morning Star" suggested an Indian pair, leaving "Julius S. Walsh" and "Stacker Lee" as possible mates for the "Belle of Calhoun" and "Susie Hazard."

After the departure of the belated "Belle of the Bends" that morning, the whole levee life relaxed. A negro near us sighed restfully as he leaned against a post and watched the departing boat; others, with a sort of weary eagerness, entered the levee-side saloons and restaurants.

The Painter Lady, having finished her sketch, called out: "Everybody seems to have gone—let us go, too."

"Ready in a minute," sang out the other painter without removing his gaze from his "subject," a poor, dog-tired darky, who sprawled in unconsciously comic abandon over two bales of cotton.

"I'll be ready in a minute, too," put in the

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Chronicler, who was sitting on a sack of sweet potatoes making entries in his note-book.

Along the upper waterfront, resting its foot at the water's edge, stood a colossal pier of the famous Eads bridge. This pier the Pathfinder wished to actually touch with his hands, because his school geography of twenty years ago had given generously of its space in text and illustration to the great bridge that had then no rival.

"Yes," confessed the Pathfinder, smiling, "I always wanted to see it and I used to dream of the day when I would be grown up and travel 'way out West'—days when my Pennsylvania village would speak of her globe-trotting son and——"

"Well, here comes the Pennsylvania Limited now—perhaps, it has some of your former Pennsylvania-Dutch neighbours aboard, coming to help you celebrate the event," broke in the Painter Lady, pointing to the lettering on the express that was rolling slowly stationward over the "elevated" that parallels the levee. The Pathfinder joined in the laugh raised against him and led the way to the pier. Somehow, it was a solid—nay, one might say, *stolid*—sort of a pier, and there was really no perceptible tremor or emotion among its stones as the Pathfinder patted it with a friendly hand. Its lifelong admirer still had his hand on the masonry, when the place echoed with



THE LEVEES AND EADS BRIDGE, ST. LOUIS



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a sudden burst of wild yells and rollicking laughter. This, accompanied by sounds of scampering feet scuttering over the gravel, fairly jerked our heads around in time to see a case of pursued and pursuers. It was the raiding of a "crap" game by the police, who, concealed in some huge sections of sewer pipe that awaited shipment, were out and upon their quarry in a few stumbly and scrambly leaps. In fact, these ludicrous stumblings of the officers as they rose from their hands and knees had set off the explosive laughter of bystanders.

One of the gamesters escaped and thereupon began a chasing scene that would have enriched the "movies." He was a very tall negro with a long wooden leg, and how like a "seven league boot" did that peg-leg seem to propel its owner in wild hopperty-jumps down, around, over and across the freight-cluttered levee!

But they caught him and he was led off with the other captives, while everybody, even the officers, still laughed and chortled.

We now retraced our steps. By this time many of the weary roustabouts had eaten their "bite" or drunk their "dra-am" and were lounging and snoozing among a pile of cotton bales.

Some of the younger ones were dancing. What a slouchy grace of body certain of them had! How rhythmic the swaying of their great hulk-



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ing bodies as they kept time with a tingling little tune breathed from a pair of "Jew's harps"!

And all this food and drink and rest and music because some of them had received their pittance of one cent apiece for each portly barrel of apples they had rolled up that steep and bumpy slope!

Poor darky roustabout, what would you do without your levee life?—there you work and eat and sleep and sing and fight. There you fill your life's poor measure, for at noon comes Dinah with the dinner pail—and Love.

## CHAPTER II

### *Down the Mississippi*

Down the Mississippi—The Lady Cotton Planter—A Night for Poets and Painters—"By the Mark Twain!"—A Lonesome Landing—The Mouth of the Ohio.

Two days later the St. Louis and Memphis packet "Stacker Lee," with our party aboard, backed away from her wharfboat exactly on schedule time.

We fancied that the boat seemed rather proud of her promptness by the way her stern backed smartly upstream, slewed the bow clear of the other boats, and was gone.

We Californians walked astern to admire, once more, the Eads bridge; to comment on the graceful stride of the beautiful arches as they curved upward and downward from pier to pier as lightly as a fawn might leap. Truly is the great bridge a monument to the genius of its engineer. He could combine in a bridge extraordinary length and unobtrusive strength—the whole dominated by a delicately balanced grace.

Two more fine bridges spanned the river below the levee, but they lacked the soul of the Eads

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creation. The church towers and factory chimneys of the city now passed in a continuous procession; above them a murky sky, so London-like that we looked back after passing under the last lofty span to make sure that *it* was not the famous Tower bridge, or that a great dome looming up against the afternoon sky was not old St. Paul's.

Mile after mile we steamed past St. Louis, for, list ye, O ye *port*-proud "men of Gotham," this mid-continental river port lays claim to twenty miles of water-front!

As the smoke-hued twilight came quickly on and closed the late September day, we lost St. Louis in the murky haze. Soon followed the first few lights of evening, twinkling out a friendly farewell to, at least, three voyagers who stood in happy silence at the stern of the "Stacker Lee."

A gong, so soft-toned that it was in itself, so to speak, quite appetizing, summoned us to supper.

"Supper" in that grand salon? Yes, but that extraordinarily long and squeezingly narrow dining-room, with a great gleaming mirror at one end and the glittering array of cutlery down each side of the vast long tables, was more terrifying than appetizing!

However, it was much more "humanly inter-

## DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI

esting" a few moments later when two parallel black lines of human forms sent forth a friendly buzz of tongues and started a lively clatter of rattling dish and tinkling glass.

At every one's seat there had been placed an upturned plate, flanked on either side by knife and fork, the whole topped off with a paper napkin. Coloured waiters moved quickly and silently as they placed beside each diner a bewildering cluster of little dishes.

At the supper table we became acquainted with a lady cotton planter, who was returning to her Memphis home from a visit to her brother in North Dakota. She had a rich Southern accent and a friendly charm of manner. Her sweet, calm face, with its fluffy sprays of silvered hair at either temple, gave the impression that its owner had passed through the spiritualizing experience of motherhood and was perhaps even now some wee toddler's young-faced "gran'ma." Alas, oh, alas, for the poor Pathfinder who sagely whispered this deduction to his friends—the lady proved to be a "spinster"!

We all grew to like her very much; her type and personality were rather new and refreshing to the artists. The Pathfinder had once lived several years in "Dixie" and was well aware of the subtle charm possessed by most Southern men as well as women. She told us

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that her visit to Dakota had been her first bit of travel outside of her native South; that it had been, to use her own expression, her first trip "up No'th." "Up North?—I thought you said Dakota," commented the Pathfinder, giving her a puzzled smile, and forgetting for a moment that to a native of "Dixie" all is "north" above the Ohio and the Mason-Dixon line. Also he had lapsed into *his* early Pennsylvania viewpoint, that all is "'way out West" that lies beyond Cincinnati!

"We would like to have you join our party on deck," we said to "Mistress Memphis" after supper. "That is," the Pathfinder hastened to add, "if you can endure our artist-ravings, our queer comments and general happy irresponsibility." The kindly lady fairly fluttered in her willingness to take a chance with us.

We found it very pleasant on deck. All about us on board were cheerful beams of light, and out on the broad bosom of the great river a soft, velvety and poetic darkness shut out the land.

To the curiously measured sobbing sound of the "exhaust" we slipped easefully down a river that we could not see; we looked forward expectantly toward a world of new experiences that held for us a touch of mystery.

From the flickering shadows of her cosy cor-

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ner, the fair Southerner breathed a soft-voiced question; it was accompanied by an engaging smile—a smile that we sensed more in her voice than saw on her mouth.

“May I ask if you-all are going South for the winter?”

“No, we are going to New York,” answered the Painter Man, under whose lee the little lady had sought shelter from the occasional chilly puffs of the night air.

“Oh,” disappointedly, “are you New York No’theners?”

We assured her of our innocence, adding that we called ourselves Californians.

“Oh” (evidently a bit relieved), “*that’s* where you-all are from? I want to go there some day.”

A bell jingled in the engine-room far below, and the boat, slackening her speed, sheered toward the Missouri shore. We could only see a tree-covered bluff looming against the sky, as our party lined the rail to watch the “Stacker” make her landing.

Suddenly, from the black mouth of a tunnel in the cliff there shrieked and roared a fast express, its dazzling headlight blinding and bewildering us like a smash in the face! Before we could shield our eyes, the light had gone and the shrieking monster it guided was plunging with

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seeming exultation into the cavernous depths of another tunnel.

"That's good—begone," growled the Painter Man, glaring balefully after it as all was suddenly still again.

For a few moments we were all silent, luxuriating in the return to the quiet and poetry of the river. Only for a few moments was it thus; for, as if to playfully mock us, the "Stacker Lee" herself suddenly let loose a choky, gurgly hiss from her whistle, and followed it by a good old roar that really did awaken the echoes from the rocky shore!

As the storm of sound died away, the Painter Lady removed her fingers from her ears and remarked: "I was so interested listening to the whistle trying to *clear its throat* that I forgot to be startled when the *real* crash came."

Not to be outdone by any of the smart capers of a rail-bound night express that could not swing at will from shore to shore like a free-born boat, the old Mississippi packet sent *her* searchlight cutting into darkness and dispelled the shadows along the shore in front of us. That searchlight!—what an almost living thing it seemed—a very Spirit of Light!

Swiftly, like silent blows, its brilliant point struck the bank—here on a rocky outcrop, there on a blasted tree—hopping, skipping, jumping.

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Now it rested a second or two longer on one spot, as if in closer scrutiny of some recognized landmark, and then—*zip!*—it was out—just like that!

“He is trying to pick up the landing, I guess,” remarked the Pathfinder in a low tone, as if he feared to interrupt the process of search. Now came a jingle of bells below and the engines stopped. We drifted a few seconds in dead silence—expectant. Then came a hoarse roar from the whistle (no throat-clearing this time), another jingle in the engine-room, a few careful “chuff-chuffs” from the stacks—more bells—and again we drifted. A window in the pilot-house slid back with a bang, and a powerful voice hailed the cargo deck far below: “Stand by with your stage, down there.”

“Stage all ready, sir,” came the mate’s response, as he switched on the cluster lights along the cargo deck.

“Bang-a-lang-clang, bang-a-lang-clang,” and the boat’s big bell fairly jarred the upper deck on which it stood. It stopped as suddenly as it started. Out shot the searchlight again.

“Ah, hah, the landing!” we exclaimed as our eager eyes saw it coming into view from behind a projecting point. Now we began to round-to with beautiful precision, bow upstream. Soon our port beam was scraping along the low, grav-



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elly bar that did duty as a landing. A lone darky watchman was stumbling sleepily about over the slippery, mud-coated gravel, inadequately armed with a feebly flickering candle-lantern.

Once more the bells jingled and the great stern wheel flop-flop-flopped a turn or two and pushed the "Stacker's" nose in to the shore. But the gravel slipped too much, so the wheel was kept slowly turning in order to hold her there.

A sharp command came from the dark pilot-house and the heavy stage began to reach out and drop gradually through the air to the bank, carrying with it a half-dozen package-laden roustabouts. Two of them actually leaped off while the big plank was still some six feet above the ground; and hardly had it really touched, when a line of men began swarming over it, taking packages ashore and meeting in mid-plank those who bore burdens aboard. This was the acme of smartness, so the darkies thought.

Soon, one of the shuffling, swaying darkies started a work-chorus and the men leaped yet faster to their task. But it had been a fatiguing afternoon for them, and it was also nearly bedtime, so the poor sleepy creatures slowly slackened their gait.

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Then it was we discovered that the "Stacker Lee" had on board another Human Whip like unto the one who drove the darkies at St. Louis. This man had a low, monotonous voice, yet so insistently masterful that it seemed to hit each laggard and make him jump as if suddenly stabbed in the back. Above the racket of other sounds that weird, rasping singsong could be heard. Two Louisiana sugar planters sitting near the rail found their talk disturbed by the spiteful drone of that acrid voice and stopped to listen. Even a pair of lovers came shyly out from the shadow of a friendly deck-house and listened, too.

Yet that lean-bodied, sharp-jawed man with the cold grey eyes (the "slave driver" as we had named him) was seen next day at Cairo talking soothing baby-talk to a wee girl toddler, who had strayed into danger among the rushing freight trucks. In twenty minutes we were backing off the gravel bar, and the landing and bluff above it were swallowed up in the darkness, leaving only the tiny point of light from the watchman's lantern to indicate the solid earth of a moment before.

The excitement and novelty of our first landing over, we went below and enjoyed for awhile the music and dancing which was being indulged in by some half-dozen young people.

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“Let’s turn in,” suggested the Painter Man some time later, as he stifled a yawn.

“I’m with you—but let us first go up on deck and say ‘good-night’ to the river,” answered the Pathfinder—a suggestion which met with instant favour.

But once we were on the upper deck, there was that to see and that to hear which was to go on record, with us, as one of the most interesting of our many experiences in all the twelve hundred and fifty miles of our river voyage.

It was a night for philosophers, poets and painters. The light haze of early evening had cleared away before a gentle wind from the west—a wind that bore on its wings great masses of blue-black clouds floating across openings of starlit sky.

Looking ahead, abeam or far astern, one could see little points of light peeping shyly forth from invisible headlands—for many a friendly beacon guides the grateful pilots even when the blackest night enshrouds the swirling river. Against the low-flying clouds to the westward there now bloomed a warm, soft glow. We were approaching the Missouri shore again. The glow came from the lights of a little town standing inland beyond the wooded bluffs that now came dimly into view. Soon we were near enough to see the outlines of several quite pretentious

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villas on the crown and terraces of the wooded bank.

Drifting silently, but all alert for some landing just around the point, many of the boat's crew, like ourselves, seemed to be enjoying the peace of the night and the quiet of the stilled machinery. But with a crash of sound that peace went all to pieces! Just as earlier in the evening, it was an express train (whistle-shrieking, bell-clanging and wheel flanges screeching on the curving rail, it roared into hearing around a bend in the upper bluff). With a parting bellow at the startled folk below, it darted out of sight like a wicked urchin, seeking safety from pursuit and punishment. How quiet and peaceful was our river-world, the instant that train was gone! What a chance to contrast the two modes of travel! We spoke of the old river's Romantic Yesterdays—a period more given to the graces of life and dignity of movement—a time of leisurely days and neighbourly ways.

The landing we now approached was quite an important one, judging from the number of passengers and the piles of freight awaiting us under a well-lighted and commodious wharfboat. Automobiles were there, parked or passing up and down the steep road leading from the bluff above.

St. Genevieve we think it was, old, and French, no doubt, in its founding—a relic of the early

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French Canadians who some time in the seventeen hundreds first explored the middle reaches of the great stream.

Out again, far out, on the broad waters of the silent river. The heavier clouds had passed and through the lighter ones, stretched handlike across the eastern sky, a late moon rose. Far across the noble reach of water now broadening like a bay, Luna spread a narrow path of tawny silver—a silver that shone with a dull, rich tone as of old metals. And lo, the muddy river was now transformed! It was a welter of silvery grey and velvety dark greens. Above it arched a sky of shimmery, silver-blue curtained here and there with lacy cloudlets whose gun-metal greys were lined with a luminous quality defying the skill of brush and palette.

While we were animatedly discussing this wonderful exhibition of “nocturne” colour there came a sudden stopping of the engines, followed by a very uncomfortable silence. Out popped the querulous searchlight. It peered ahead, but seemed not to find what it sought. Back and forth across our course it swept until, biff!—it stopped and lighted up a nasty “snag” that showed its shore-jagged branches just above the water scarce sixty feet ahead! *Zip!*—and the light was gone. Bells jingled, the smokestacks sent out a long cautious “whoo-uff” as the “Stacker” started

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again and slid, sort of sidewise, past the danger point.

It was getting rather late, and we were trying to scandalize each other by saying "it must be nearly midnight," when "jingle" went the engine-room bell again, and the "Stacker Lee" slacked up.

The great bell gave a succession of little taps, causing the lookout man, who stood close by us, to turn swiftly and come to stiff "attention." A window was opened in the pilot-house up above there in the gloom and a quiet, clear voice called out:

"Heave the lead!"

Thus began an incident that we three will probably never forget. Two words were presently called out by the man at the lead; two words that brought to our minds a rush of memories of a beloved American, who had written, a generation ago, of the life on this great river; two words that seemed to bring him back amongst us from the Great Beyond. . . . *Swish!*—the lead-line was sent whirling ahead. Then the leadsman began hauling in; he stopped—stooped, and peered closely at a fluttering ragmark on the line; up went his head and voice towards the deck above, calling out:

"MAR-RE TWAIN."

As we caught our breath in a series of rapt

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"o-oh's" a rich singsong baritone rolled from a darky throat on the topmost deck and passed the magic words up to the pilot-house:

"*By the mar-rk twa-a-in.*"\*

As the musically drawled crescendo died away, we all three opened our mouths to tell each other of our sensations; of our reading long, long ago Mark Twain's "Life" on this very Mississippi; of the lump in the throat of one of us as he recalled the memory of that quaint humourist and lovable man, Mark Twain. We all started to speak, but at the same instant something deep down in our souls impelled us to silence; for we read a full appreciation of the incident written on each other's faces.

It was interesting to remember that Clemens adopted for his *nom de plume* that bit of old English sea-phrasing, "mark twain," because it pleased his ear and also his sense of humour, it being a very effective disguise for "Samuel L. Clemens." In fact, so effectually did this *nom de plume* take the place of his family name, that it is by the former that he became most generally known (and loved) by his countrymen. In adopting it, he gave to the world one of the most fascinating pen names in American letters.

Now, the lead was being heaved again. From

\* I.e., two fathoms.

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"the mark twain" it had shallowed rather alarmingly to "a quarter less two"; soon it deepened to "a quarter less three," and a ring of relief came into the old leadsman's voice. Next: "by the mark six" (his increasing satisfaction prompting him to space the words wider), and then, in a long-drawn-out tone of satisfied finality: "N-o bott-om!" The shallows were now safely passed, and the sensitive, quivering framework of our boat rioted into new life as the engines were put at "full speed ahead."

Now and then throughout the night resounding blasts from the fog horn reached our sleepy senses, but the sound only came to *us* as a sonorous lullaby. We slept soundly until a fusillade of door-rappings, coming ever nearer and nearer down the long salon, made us dreamily aware of a new day that awaited us on deck.

"Rap-a-tap-tap"—now it was at our own door. "All right," we answer sleepily.

"Good-mawnin'—it's sa-ay-ven o'clock, sah; git ready, you-all, f' brakefus," came the pleasantly drawled summons to the morning meal.

With the eager anticipation of children we dressed and hurried to the upper deck to bid our beloved river a cheery "good-morning." But alas, its mood was cold and grey, for a damp and chilly air—half fog, half frost—lay over the



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surface of the waters. We stood a few minutes quite rebuffed and slightly ashiver with the chill, but a few brisk turns along the deck soon warmed our blood and sent us below with frost-sharpened appetites to the right royal breakfast that awaited us there.

Braced and cheered by that hearty meal, we went on deck to begin our "day's work of pleasure," as one of us expressed it.

The mist was now thinning a little as a feeble sun tried to dry it up. A desolate-looking group of scrubby little willows at the foot of a bank of reddish clay were looming up out of the fog on our starboard side.

"How the Missouri bluffs have changed during the night!" exclaimed the Painter Man, eyeing the scene with every mark of disapproval.

His annoyed discomfiture amused the Pathfinder, who grinned and said, "Yes, I called 'em—away."

"Called what, dear?" queried Mrs. Pathfinder.

"I 'called' the Missouri's 'bluff'-s—away; see, they are gone."

Our Hercules seized the culprit and, lifting him in mid-air, threatened laughingly:

"Yes, and for that *you* are going, too—one, two, three—overboard you go—and follow your bluffs!"

But Mrs. Pathfinder, after letting the punster

## DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI

be punished with threats, played "Pocahontas" and saved (?) the life of her "Captain John."

"Jingle-ingle" sounded in the engine-room, and the wheel slowed down.

"Horrors, are they going to make a landing here?" moaned the Painter Lady.

"If they do, it will be 'adding insult to injury.' My eyes are already sore looking at it," put in the Painter Man.

The "Stacker Lee" was now rounding-to, but she did this rather sullenly, we thought, as if in some disapproval that any self-respecting passenger packet should be made to stop at such a deserted-looking place. The pilot himself seemed a "bit at sea" about just where to land and let his boat (giving spasmodic "kicks" with her slow-flopping wheel) slowly drift inshore. The mate after peering strainfully (pardon this word, coined to fit) into the mist-wrapped desolation, looked up and hailed the pilot in evident disgust:

"See any signs o' life, sir?"

"Na-aw, there hain't no freight h'yar onless it's done stowed behind them willers," adding resignedly: "Well, we've got to make a landin'—them's the orders." Saying which he "jingled" for a smart bit of headway and jammed the "Stacker's" nose a full three feet into the yielding bank.

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An agile young deckhand was sent leaping ashore to look behind the willows. He reappeared a moment later and sang out:

"S'all right, Cap'n—dey's lots-a freight back yere."

"What is it?" enquired the captain, who now appeared at the bow.

"Taters, I reckon, sah—in sacks."

"That's what the landing order calls for, sir," piped up the slender young freight clerk, brandishing aloft his tally-sheet.

"Potatoes, eh?" repeated the captain, evidently revolving some thought in his mind. "Er, see what kind, Maje—sweet or Irish."

Evidently the question was related to the matter of storage—perhaps "sweets" could not be piled near the heat of the boilers.

"Maje" appeared on the edge of the bank again.

"Dey is, dey are—ah—um—spuds, sah," spluttered the grinning boy, quite overcome and "chesty" by his sudden importance as a hidden-freight finder, who dealt direct with a roustabout's "Jove-on-Olympus"—a steamboat captain.

Very smartly a line was heaved ashore and made fast while the great plank was lowered and the loading of the potatoes began. Fat, bulging sacks were soon coming aboard, carried

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on well-set heads or broad, stooping backs. There was fine "action" for figure sketching, so the Painter Man was drawing rapidly with zest and skill. That burden-bearing line of men passing up and down the landing stage was one of the scenes he had come to the river to paint, and American art is already richer by one fine "river" canvas as a result of our long inland voyage.

Well, the Landing-at-the-Willows, as we came to name it, was not the main Missouri shore after all, but a long fertile island just off from it.

The island had been piled up there by the river in recent years, and the great stream was already taking back the gift it had made to Missouri—probably at the expense of Iowa or Illinois.

The steep six-foot bank was newly cut by the rapid current, and we saw, just above our boat's nose, great masses of earth that had slipped from the top to the edge of the water and that would soon be carried away by it. Each landslide brought down a piece of the cornfield above. One great mass had fallen without disturbing a tiny forest of cornstalks and they stood upright on it, like fearless sailors going bravely to death in the flood. As their wet, rusty leaves fluttered slightly in the rising breeze, one could imagine

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that they were waving a last farewell to their friends, who still stood safe at the edge of the field.

A series of hoarse bellows now roared from the fog horn. This was a signal to the owner to come quickly and sign the tally-sheet. Soon a forlorn and emotionless little boy bumped up to the edge of the bank, riding bareback on a bony horse. Silent and brooding, he sat on his starveling steed with all the stern aloofness of a Napoleon! And it was not until the youthful freight clerk handed to the boy the tally-sheet for his "O. K." that the hidden ramrod in his little back unbent a bit and his lips moved ever so slightly in uneasy monosyllables in response to a cheery something spoken by the clerk.

The watchful pilot seeing the tally-sheet being signed, pulled the whistle cord for a warning blast and hooked an expectant finger in the handle of the jingle wire, waiting for the mate to call out:

"All ready, sir. Let's go."

This came the moment the plank was clear of the ground, and the pilot got his boat away so smartly that she was almost on her course again by the time the creaking pulleys had lifted the heavy stage up to its place.

The men were now served with a generous

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breakfast. This they ate as they sat on flat-topped freight or squatted on deck with their tired backs resting against the piles of sacked potatoes.

By now the sun was out, warming and comforting. One by one the food-filled stomachs of the weary darkies lured them into delicious dozings. Some, however, slept quite soundly as do most of the negroes, with utter abandon in their sprawling bodies—a dreamless log-like sleep. Nor were the roustabouts alone in their resting after breakfast; for it seemed as if all the ship's company that was not "on watch" took their ease as the "Stacker Lee" sped swiftly on downstream.

Sometimes we were in mid-river; sometimes near to the eastern bank, rounding past headlands; occasionally quite close under them. Now and then we slid carefully over hidden sandbars where the circling eddies were golden in the morning sun.

Presently the Pathfinder remarked that "we must be nearing Cape Girardeau," and went below for his map and schedule. He returned and said it was somewhere over on the Missouri shore, but our binoculars failed to pick up any indication of a town on that bank. Then he interested his friends by telling them about the theory of certain "highbrows" in geology who say that the

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Gulf of Mexico once extended this far north. They believe it came as a narrow inlet up to Cape Girardeau, where it received the waters of the Mississippi as they tumbled over a lofty fall from a vast tableland above.

However, we did not see anything of Cape Girardeau except on the map, and about mid-forenoon we began to look for signs of the Ohio along the eastern shore. So, when shortly after eleven o'clock a pilot stepped blinkingly to the deck from his bunk in the "texas," the Pathfinder turned and questioned him.

The man smiled, rolled up his shirt sleeves and started his morning ablutions in a rather tiny tin basin, as he repeated:

"Cayro?—oh, pretty soon now. I'm washin' up so's to"—splash, splutter-splash, in rapid succession—"go to the wheel an' take you-all up to Cayro; it's just a mile or two over the tops o' them trees." Presently he extended a pointing hand (from which dangled a towel) and said: "But we have to double 'way down around that long sandy point ahead yander."

"Then that is the smoke of Cairo I see above the treetops," remarked the Painter Man.

"That's what," said the pilot, rolling down his sleeves.

The spot of sandy beach now lengthened out into a sliver-like bar of sand. It curved ever so

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slightly away towards the Ohio, from what was evidently the more powerful thrust of the larger river. A little green houseboat sat perched high and dry where the sand-spit left the wooded bank. A man, evidently its owner, sat far out on a log that had stranded on the extreme tip of that mere finger of shore, and, utterly oblivious of our approach or of the fact that his log was at the meeting-point of two of the world's greatest rivers—calmly fished and—paradox—spat tobacco juice into both the mighty streams at once!

We now stood tensely at the forward flagstaff, all a-tiptoe with expectation, waiting for the moment when we would be past the wooded bank and get a clear view of the Ohio across the sandy point.

It was dramatically yet delightfully tantalizing. Swiftly now the screening trees slipped past like a sliding door, when—hurrah!—we saw across the sand-spit the vast, lake-like mouth of the Ohio!

So great an expanse of quietly eddying, sunlit water lay spread before us that we had to stretch our eyes, so to speak, all over it in order to sense the full nobility of its volume. What a friendly merging of mighty streams! It was like two genial giants meeting with gladsome smile and cordial grasp of hands.



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We men were silent, striving, man-like, to suppress our adjectives, and it was the Painter Lady who voiced our sentiments, when she breathed in a vibrant tone:

“It’s a perfect sea of rivers!”

## CHAPTER III

### *Cairo and Paducah*

Cairo—Up the Ohio—The Mussel Industry—Paducah and the Old Home of Irvin Cobb.

THE atlas of our schooldays showed Cairo exactly at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi, but the sturdy old "Stacker Lee" had to turn her wheel over both fast and strong for the better part of half an hour before she had pushed herself up to the wharf there and tied up.

The fact is, modern Cairo is glad to be a good safe two miles up the Ohio and leave her ancient site in the possession of the Mississippi, for that robber stream had swept away or overflowed two-thirds of the older city in days gone by.

Once tied up at the wharfboat, the "Stacker Lee's" many decks were alive with sound and movement. Here we, and many others, transhipped. Passengers and freight for Ohio River points all went ashore at Cairo. Our party were to transfer to the Memphis and Cincinnati packet "Ohio," which was due in two hours.

The "Stacker" was exactly on the schedule

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that the Pathfinder had worked on as a base of calculations many months ago back in far-away San Francisco. So, in full faith and trust that everything was going as planned, the Pathfinder suggested a lunch ashore and a look over the town.

The "Stacker" being about to start, we bade "good-bye" to the amiable "Miss Cotton Planter" and then toiled up the steep slope of the rock-paved bank to the town level. We found a quiet little business street on the top and, near by, the old-fashioned looking hotel at which we had been told we could get "a sure good dinner." We found, later, that we had not been misinformed. The food and the service were excellent. The whole atmosphere of the place was unusually pleasing, being rather more Southern in character than the Pathfinder had expected to find.

But let us describe those "fleshpots of (Cairo) Egypt." The two artists, like the gifted author of "Old Seaport Towns of the South," delighted in good meals, and were ever ready to try any new and savoury dish that a strange region might offer. Such did they find at Cairo—two or three delicious new dishes. The smiley, soft-voiced coloured servants were so pleased to see the approving nods these new foods won, that they brought more, and so generously, so often did they bring

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more, that the amused but rather Puritan-stomached Pathfinder, "in a low, mysterious voice," warned his companions of the dangers of "foundering."

That meal has always been a pleasant memory, for even the Pathfinder experienced a whimsical, yea, a proud, satisfaction as he surreptitiously smoothed his slightly bulging vest.

After the meal, a trolley ride enabled us in fifteen minutes to see all we cared of the flat and uninteresting little Cairo that squats on the cold, damp soil behind the high, protecting levee.

There was a pleasant little lookout sort of park on the top of the bank just in front of the old hotel. Here we sat and waited for the "Ohio" to come into view, when she would swing into the mouth of the river. From there we could see steamboats passing up and down the Mississippi; could see some of them swing around the slender sand-spit as we had done. They would then start to "buck" the current of the Ohio, cascading streams of yellow water from their ponderous stern wheels in the effort. But alas, the "Ohio" did not heave in sight.

The artists fretted, for there was nothing sketchable to relieve the tedium of waiting. To amuse and interest them while they waited, the Pathfinder drew a word picture—the only picture

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he *can* draw, by the way—of the monthly travels and tasks that the “Ohio’s” heartless (?) and grasping master makes it perform.

“The ‘Ohio’ is quite middle-aged,” he began, “strong, sturdy and willing, but, as can be well imagined, not overly swift. Swiftness is given only to shorter runs and stronger engines—to big modern side-wheelers, gay with bright paint and happy excursionists. However, she plies faithfully on her schedule, as a rule, I am told, and is a steady connection, by way of Cincinnati, between Mr. Cotton Planter Memphis and Mr. Steel Worker Pittsburg.”

“Just think of that poor old boat” (here the speaker spread out his arms and palms, intending it as a moving appeal, but it looked more like a shopkeeper of the Ghetto on Baxter Street, New York, selling a suit of clothes!). “Just think,” he repeated, “of that top-heavy old boat steadily slapping with her battered paddles fifteen hundred miles of that mud-weighted water out there every time she makes her monthly trip from Memphis to Cincinnati and back!”

By this time the burly form of the Painter Man (a kindly giant at heart) threatened to shake with sobs of sympathy; seeing this, the old “Ohio’s” self-appointed Chief Advocate rested his case.

Anyway, the impassioned plea seemed to put

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the artists in a more forgiving mood toward the poor old boat; for they raved not, neither did they curse, when a prospective fellow-passenger called out to us in passing, "Just heard there's mighty poor prospects of seeing the 'Ohio' before to-morrow!"

We at once followed, going direct to the wharfboat to question the agent. He was smilingly embarrassed and, apparently, slightly ashamed of this unseemly escapade of the staid "Ohio."

"She *is* a-goin' to be mighty late, I reckon, suh—mebbe a day—mebbe two (here we moaned in chorus), for she's still at Memphis unloading her Louisville freight, so her captain wired me a few minutes ago. . . . Mighty sorry you-all's so discommoded, 'specially the lady," he concluded, as he observed her look of mild dismay.

A voice at our elbow: "Allow me to suggest, friends," began a grey-moustached man of the "Colonel" type, addressing our party with much courtliness of manner, "that you-all come along on the 'Padukey' boat with wife and I—that's the boat over there—the 'Rapids.' She's a-going to start in a few minutes."

We hesitated, but gave him a friendly smile.

"Better come," he urged in his soft Kentucky drawl, "Padukey's a right smart little

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old town over there in old Kaintuck, and only about fifty miles upstream. . . . Big new hotel there, too. . . . Don't wait here for that woozy old stern-splasher; let 'er pick you up at Padukey."

The smoothly flowing voice was irresistible. We thanked him, quite convinced, but turned to the agent for his official sanction of the new plan.

The latter was a rather diffident young man, and we suspected he was quite grateful for the elder man's aid in planning to get politely rid of us.

"I reckon that's a good idea," he said, brightening up, "but I'll have to hustle some to get your baggage to the other boat before she leaves."

He called a loafing roustabout, who was playing a game of "craps"—solitaire—and ordered him to put our baggage aboard the "Rapids." "An' be mighty peart about it, too," was the parting admonition.

The stalwart young negro struggled cheerfully and manfully enough with our bags and boxes, but he certainly would have starved to death as an equilibrist! When the stuff was piled up on his truck, he had the leaning tower of Pisa hopelessly outleaned, and, by comparison, a good "safe bet," as George Ade would say. See, oh

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see, the Pathfinder and the Painter Man on either side of that wobbly pile, each man with both hands (and wishing for two more) steadying the load!

The grinning ducky, happy at the prospect of earning a silver quarter, was naively irresponsible and evidently honoured at being assisted by the "white folks." They, while dodging the freight that beset their progress, grabbed wildly at falling pieces of their belongings with a laughing but nimble effectiveness that compelled the admiration of all beholders!

"It's sho' a hard tussle, white fo'kes," gasped the ducky, pulling mightily at his truck. Then, breaking out into a perspiration (whereupon his assistants desired to desert) and a work-chant at the same time, he crooned:

"Oh, der white fo'kes's trunks mus' roll erlong—mus' roll erlong." . . . Then a bit of self-admonishment in quickened tempo. . . . "Step 'long lively, you pokey niggah, or dey'll miss dat boat—Lordy, she's a-poppin'!"

The chanting stopped as abruptly as the popping started—the "pop" of the "Rapids'" safety valve giving the roustabout the last bit of urging needed to make him break through to the clear space leading to that steamer's gangway.

As the "Rapids" passed under the long, slender bridge that spans the river just above the



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wharf at Cairo, the "Colonel" remarked to the Painter Man:

"Right smart bridge the Illinois Central throwed across here, eh?"

"Ye-es," replied the other, trying to see its "approach" on the opposite side, "but it doesn't seem to stop at the bank—it keeps going right on being a bridge—why?"

"Lor-dee, they got to bridge way beyond the bank for a mile or so—it's all back-water and swamp over there. . . . You see, when the old Missysip goes on a rampage and won't let the Ohio flow right on out, this little old mud-run here (sweeping his arm up and down the noble stream) has to back up some, *I'm* tellin' ye!"

The Colonel was *so* refreshing—so likable; we grew to feel, in a few hours, that we had needed him all our lives. He was cheerfully devoted to his frail, sweet-faced wife, whom he was bringing from St. Louis, after treatment by a specialist there.

At first thought it seemed to us to be a long, long way from his home at the mouth of the Cumberland to St. Louis; but it served to show us how much more convenient and comfortable it is to go long distances by the waterways than much shorter ones by rail.

Many interesting things were told us about the

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river and the river-folk by the Colonel, who had had some piloting experience himself. Now and then he humorously referred to himself as being, compared to us—travellers from a far country—a mere “chucklehead” who had never been very far away from his own “little old wooden country.”

Why *wooden* we never quite gathered, unless it was a word heritage from the heavily forested period of pioneer days.

We found ourselves greatly interested in the “musselers”—the mussel fishermen. It was a pretty sight to see their “shanty” and “flat” boats, all festooned with lines of pendant shells blinking and twinkling as the breeze swung them with ceaseless, tremulous movement in the drying sun.

This is a frequent and interesting sight all along the lower Ohio. Many a valuable pearl is found in the mussels—varying in value from ten dollars to ten hundred—but the chief object of the industry is to provide raw material for the button factories.

Since the World War has shut off our importations of buttons from Germany, the mussel fisheries of the middle Mississippi and its tributaries of that region have been greatly developed. Government protection is now being given to the nation's fresh-water mussel beds.

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It was nearing our fourth hour from Cairo, and after the smart little "Rapids" had backed away from one of her many landings, that the Colonel came along for another chat, and to tell us that Paducah was the next stop and but "twenty minutes" around the next bend.

The Painter Man, who had been surreptitiously sketching some of our fellow-passengers, now closed his book and said to the unusually silent Pathfinder:

"Well, Billabdy, what do you think of the Ohio river by this time?"

"Oh," came the reply, "I really have not been observing as closely as usual—my head has been busy with the new path-finding problems that our delayed Cincinnati packet may bring up for solution . . . but, about the river—well—I have been expecting to see it become a little narrower, but it hasn't—so far as I can judge."

The big man smiled reassuringly. "No need to worry about transportation on *this* river, I guess,—we've seen many more boats than we did on the Mississippi," that cheerful optimist comforted.

"Oh yes," interposed the Painter Lady as she made a note in her neat little diary, "I've counted more boats, more landings and ever so many more women passengers."

The Pathfinder smiled approvingly and said:

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"That's fine!—you are good scout-lieutenants—I guess it is going to be as I had reasoned out,—a very busy and 'human' sort of river."

It was a *moist* welcome that we received at Paducah. It was not the welcome of tear-moistened eyes, but the questionable welcome of rain-moistened skies.

However, we went gaily forth into the shower, trotting and laughing under the bobbing umbrellas to the "big new hotel" some two or three blocks up and over the levee.

The hotel proved to be just what we needed after the somewhat limited conveniences of the river steamers. Hot baths, a well-served dinner and soothing music soon put us into the highest of spirits, despite the fact that we could not go out and explore in the pouring rain.

But the lure of the rain-splashed streets reflecting the soft lights of the shop windows was too much for the Painter Man. He yielded to the temptation and went out, so we watched him, a lonely figure on the almost deserted street, go splashing with quiet joy far down the way and out of sight. Soon he returned with *glowing* accounts of the lighted streets, and a pathetic plea that it was too wonderful to be *thoroughly* enjoyed if one were alone, so the rest of us were beguiled into our raincoats and rubbers, and all sallied forth into the soft warm rain.

## ON THE OHIO

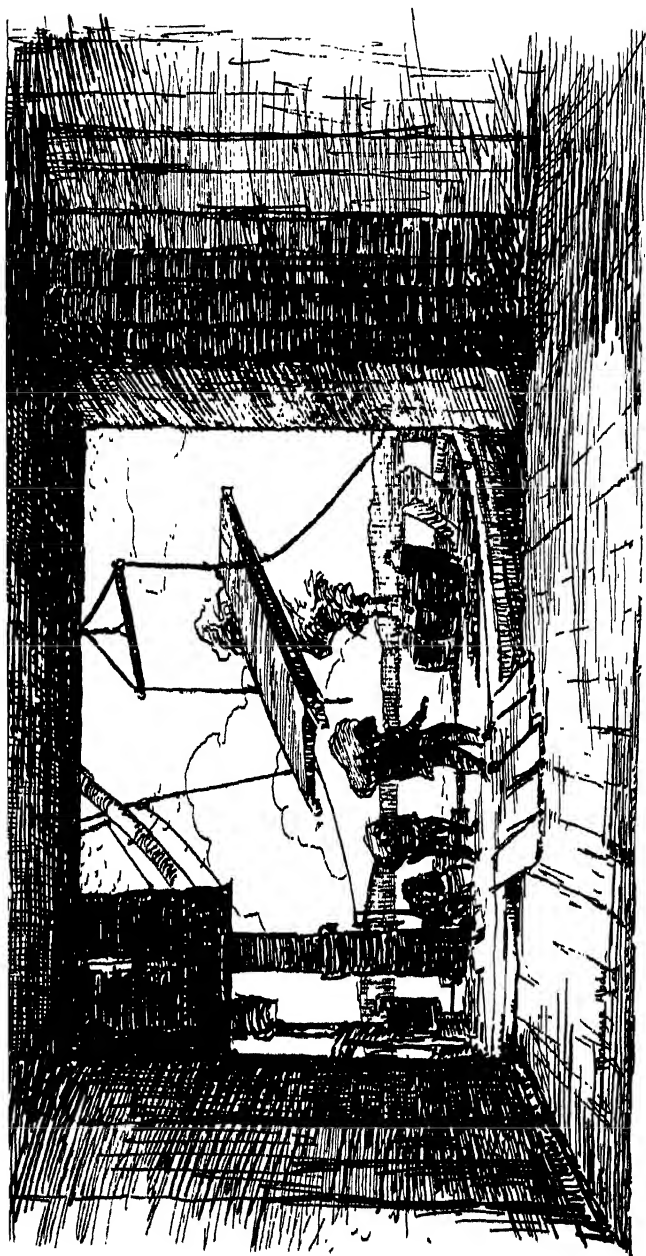
Although Paducah has no imposing bridge like Cairo, spanning the river and lifting a dramatic silhouette against the sky—a sight to awe the river voyager passing beneath—yet she has a charm, for she gives the stranger within her gates a certain “comfy” feeling that she is “homey” and prosperous. Well built, but not noisily so, she is just a well-to-do, pleasant-mannered Southern matron—and commendably satisfied to be just that.

Next morning the Painter Man was up betimes to see what the town had to offer in the way of “subjects.” He returned just in time to save the Pathfinders from missing their breakfast.

“It is still showery,” he called out, the top of his lofty head actually visible through the open transom, “and I’ve found some beautiful rainy-day subjects . . . went down to the levee . . . no news of the ‘Ohio’ . . . will see you around the waterfront, later.”

And down at the river we found him. He was sketching a funny old stern-wheeler laid up in a back-water cove, and a slender, mild-mannered young man was silently holding over him a very capacious old cotton umbrella.

“This gentleman kindly offered to hold his umbrella over me—but I’m sure he is tired by now,—won’t you relieve the gentleman, Billabdy?”



ON THE WHARFBOATS, PADUCAH, KY.



## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

All this without missing a stroke or looking up. The young man smiled shyly and said he "reckoned" he *would* "rest a spell."

"Yes, let me take it now,—I'll be the Lord High Umbrella Holder for his Highness," laughed the Pathfinder.

"*Highness* is right," quietly commented the young man; "he straightened up suddenly onct and the umbrella was yanked up out of my hands an' me nigh a-follerin' it—he's *high* all right!"

Soon after the smiles that this remark had called forth, passed, the big fellow, all absorbed in his sketching, almost caught the Pathfinder the same way as he shot up suddenly from a stoop to a perpendicular, heaved an explosive sigh and exclaimed:

"Do you know—I believe I've got something!"

The kind young man was rewarded with a funny little sketch of a few lines showing the artist at work with rain streaming from his body and the good Samaritan rushing to the rescue with the proffered umbrella. He was much pleased with his "pay" and placed it carefully between the leaves of his morning paper.

The lady's charcoal now itched for action, so she found a subject that could be done from the shelter of the wharfboat. Presently she murmured:



## ON THE OHIO

"I think this subject would be better in water colour."

"So do I, *to-day*, especially—it's so *watery*." For that the Pathfinder was severely "shoo-ed" away. Escaping into the agent's office, he collided with the Colonel coming out.

"Why, I thought you were to leave very early this morning, Colonel?"

"So I was, suh, but my boat is two hours late. . . . I've just brought down the grips and now I'm going back for the missus. . . . Say, I would like to suggest a new way for you-all to see more of the towns on the river; come on, let's go to the café on the corner an' talk it over."

It was a very decent-looking place on the top of the levee and had an unusually subdued and well-managed appearance. The Colonel proved, here, that in one thing he was not true to type—he ordered a "sody" instead of the time-honoured (and time-mellowed) whiskey of his beloved Kentucky.

In a quiet, comfortable corner of that spacious barroom we outlined a new and detailed itinerary that had a great and good effect on the whole of our further voyaging up the Ohio. When the talk was over, the Colonel was warmly thanked and requested not to mention it to the others. The Pathfinder wanted to do that at his own time and in his own way.

## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

When he rejoined the Painter Lady, the Pathfinder found her half surrounded by a group of people quietly watching her as she sketched.

"Do they bother you?" he asked.

"Oh no, you should hear how they apologize for approaching near enough to see my work—in fact, the town seems 'broke' to artists the same as our old Mission towns in California."

The Painter Man came just in time to hear this.

"That's just what they are,—'broke to artists' is good!"—he commented heartily.

"When you two stop to rest, please come over to me—I'll be sitting on those sacks of salt—I want to question you about the sketching prospects here."

Later, when the artists joined the Pathfinder, he hastily hid a map he was poring over.

"O-oh," laughed the Painter Lady, "I smell mystery,—you old secret-plan maker."

"Yes," chimed in the big fellow, "you're suspected, Billabdy."

"How would you two like to sketch here a day or two more?"

"Dee-lighted!" came the favourite Rooseveltian expression, in chorus. The questioner went on, looking whimsically mysterious as he asked:

"Suppose I evolve new plans—plans that

## ON THE OHIO

would give us more time to study the river than my first itinerary allowed?"

"Anything *you* say—we can trust *you* to arrange for the best results."

And so they did trust,—with a fine and whole-hearted faith through all the joys and occasional annoyances of that wonderful trip!

By this time Mr. and Mrs. "Colonel" were coming on to the wharfboat. The husband was fairly bursting to tell, in his kindly enthusiasm, the details and broader scope of the new arrangements. However, he managed to "sit tight" and said as they bade us "good-bye" and went on board:

"Our little burg is *yours* if you come there."

When lunch time came, the Pathfinder, who is a two-meal-a-day man, left his friends and went about the town getting authentic information and concrete data anent the Colonel's plan.

During a trolley car exploration of the town after the midday meal, the Painter Lady asked her husband if he had matured his new itinerary.

"I *will* have by dinner time to-night, I think; if 'ready to serve' by that time, we will have them with the dessert."

That happy little idea, "with the dessert," delighted his companions on that and many other similar occasions. It became a unique little ceremony to be looked forward to when the Path-

## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

finder had some new plan to submit or any of the party had some "find" to announce or incident to relate. The senior member was the photographer of the party too, but this the artists nearly always forgot until he would produce, at dessert, the finished films. So there was always a pleasant surprise, and sometimes a "thrill," when they found that the camera had caught them unawares while sketching. If light and luck were right the camera would catch the artist, the sketch, the subject beyond, all on one film.

As we were being seated for dinner that night, the hotel manager came forward, bowing and smiling, to introduce himself.

"I think I can offer you a special treat to-night," he said. "We have just received some of the finest frog legs I ever saw—do you care for them?"

We all had rather vague recollections of having tasted some in years gone by, but were willing to refresh both our memories and our stomachs.

The delicacy was served, later, with certain vegetable accessories to which we added a bottle of California wine. The delicious yet delicate flavour of froggie proved so pleasing to our sense of taste that we afterwards enquired for them at other places.

When the dessert was served, the Painter Man smiled and gently urged:

## ON THE OHIO

"We are ready to hear the new plans, Bill-abdy."

"All right, it won't take long," smiled the other. "Tell me first, how long could you two linger in a place as paintable, say, as Paducah?"

"Oh, we ought to be able to get two or three characteristic and satisfactory sketches of a place in two full days—don't you think so?" answered the artist and addressing his question to the Painter Lady.

The Pathfinder went on:

"But the 'Ohio' only calls at the more important landings and even when there only remains an hour or so at the longest."

A short silence.

"But, but—you made all your plans for going through to Cincinnati on that steamer," commented Mrs. Pathfinder, hesitatingly.

"True, I did, in the usual half-ignorance of a man at a distance. If the other Ohio River towns are as rich in your material (and perhaps mine) as Paducah is, they should be more than *glanced at*; they should be *studied*."

"Well, what other plan have you?"

"To let the poor old 'Ohio'\* 'go on up the hill' without us to-morrow. . . . To go on to

\* A steamboatman's phrase; i.e., going upstream.

## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

Smithland two days later . . . from there on catch steamers having local runs and so work our way up-river as far as Cincinnati, anyway."

"Splendid!—but can it be done?"

"I have here the name, route and schedule of every boat we need between here and Cincinnati," answered the Pathfinder, producing maps and sailing lists.

A fascinating half-hour was spent on the game of picking-out-stopping-places on the maps spread out before them. By that time the lights were being suggestively extinguished in other parts of the dining-room, so the absorbing discussion of the new itinerary was continued in a quiet corner of the parlour until far past the ordinary bedtime.

The artists finally said:

"It just simply makes our mouths 'water' to think of the wonderfully improved prospects for painting that this new plan gives us."

Next morning the artists went forth to sketch. The Pathfinder went about town, too, equipped with his camera and his "nose for news." Two hours later he, in search of his friends, found the Painter Man busily sketching and surrounded by a circle of children and elderly men.

## ON THE OHIO

"Well, I've found *you*, Painter Man, but where in—in—Paducah is my wife?"

"At the brewery down there;" adding, "She's painting it."

"Heavens!—the brewery! She's not 'painting it red,' I hope!"

"Wow! I didn't think how that would sound—was absorbed in my sketching."

He stopped an instant to laugh and the elderly audience chuckled. One of the latter was overheard to remark to his neighbour that he could not "see any sense in makin' a pictur of the 'tackiest' street in town." Evidently it hurt the old man's civic pride to have a rather shabby old thoroughfare put on record in that way.

If that old gentleman could have known that that sketch of his picturesque old street has since been enjoyed by thousands of people at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco—would he feel mollified or murderous? Anyway, here's to him for having Civic Pride—as she is commonly understood.

The lady was soon found and diplomatically pried away from the delectable region of the brewery by golden promises of being forthwith led to lunch.

There is a neatly kept little park at the top of the levee, and to it we used to go to "rest

## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

our lunch"—as one of us expressed it—and enjoy the arrival and departure of the packets and passing tows—sights that never failed to interest us. On the day of the brewery-painting incident, the three friends were at the little park, as usual.

"Well, what did you find in your stroll this forenoon, Pathfinder?" asked the Painter Lady.

"Oh—several good camera 'shots,' two water colour subjects—perhaps—two local history tablets near this very spot, and some surprising data about the Tennessee River."

"Historical tablets near this spot—where?—I don't see them."

The Pathfinder expected this interested outburst on the part of his wife, for they had both contributed to the wording and designing of a similar tablet in a certain Spanish-founded town on the Pacific Coast.

"Yes, *very* close by! Shut your eyes, both of you, and I'll 'lead you to it,' as the slang of the day sees fit to say it."

Leading them some twenty paces, the while they made playful jests, he said:

"Open your eyes—look at your feet!"

They did so, and read on the tablet set into the sidewalk an interesting bit of history.

The lettering was arranged thus:



## ON THE OHIO

At The  
Foot Of This Street  
Gen. Geo. Rogers Clark  
And Followers  
Landed In 1778  
On Their Way To  
Ft. Massac, Kaskaskia  
And Vincennes

On the sidewalk at the other and lower end of the park, they were shown another tablet, which informed a later generation that,

At This Point  
Gen. U. S. Grant  
Stood And Read His Proclamation  
To The South  
Sept. 6, 1861

"Oh, I shall never forget the history I have learned here—and it was acquired so gaily."

"Yes," commented the Painter Man, "acquired quite painlessly, too." Doubtless his memory had gone to his earlier schooldays.

The little lady returned to the first tablet.

"Vincennes," she read, "Vincennes; oh, 'Alice of Old Vincennes,' by J. Thompson—*that's* what it started running through my mind. . . . Do you know, I am going to read that book again;

## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

in fact, I am going to read everything I find about the history and romance of the Ohio River region."

"So are we," chorused the other two.

The artists were then taken and shown, quite proudly, what the Pathfinder had found as water colour subjects.

But they were "*near-subjects*" only, was the combined, professional verdict.

Going back to the first tablet once more, he stood the artists on it, facing them upstream.

"I stood here," he began, "and looking up there between the bank and the long island just opposite, I suddenly remembered that the Tennessee came into the Ohio somewhere just above Paducah. It looks so much like another good-sized river up in there, that I thought that I had found the mouth of the tributary. Well, there was an old man sitting on the bench over there, so I asked him if that was the Tennessee coming down the 'cut.'"

"He smiled—squirted tobacco juice, wiped his whiskers and replied:

"'No—o, suh, but it's mostly Tennessee water, I reckon—that river jines the Ohio a few miles up on this side. That island yander must be half Tennessee soil that's washed down from up

## ON THE OHIO

there. . . . I'm a-settin' yere watchin' for the Tennessee packet to come in sight. I——"

"Say, Billabdy, what is this 'Tennessee, Tennessee, Tennessee'—is it a Tennessee plantation song?"

When everybody had stopped laughing, the Pathfinder went on:

"So I—said, 'Oh, there is a regular packet running on that river, is there? How many miles is it navigable—hundred miles or so?'

"Well, the old duffer looked profoundly hurt.

"He arose, straightened up and said, 'I'm a Tennessean, suh.' Then, as he hobbled away' on his cane, he turned and broke out with, 'No, siree, there's mighty near seven hundred miles o' good navigation on that ole river—go ask the wharf agent.'"

"And did you?"

"Yes, right away. 'Sure, there is all of that,' the agent declared. Then he said to me, 'What do you know about the Cumberland?'

"By this time I was becoming positively apprehensive about the whole matter, so I answered meekly that I knew nothing. 'Well,' he said, grinning at me, 'the Nashville packet is due here to-morrow and her cap'n will tell you all about the five hundred miles of the Cumberland that *he* navigates—if you ask him.'"

The Pathfinder finished his recital with an I-

## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

am-stunned-and-helpless sort of gesture. Verily, the Californians murmured among themselves exceedingly! Presently the Pathfinder recovered enough to remark:

"I thought I knew my United States fairly well, but, evidently, I have learned only about half of this Ohio River story."

Exclaimed the Painter Man: "And very few outsiders have! . . . And the painters of the Middle West, why haven't *they* shown scores of canvases done along this river? Already I realize how rich it is here in splendid material for really big work. Why, say"—waxing very earnest—"let me tell you something: European painters would just—simply—eat—this—stuff—right—up!"

Late that afternoon when the artists were finishing their sketches and the Chronicler his notes (he usually wrote while his friends sketched near by) the Tennessee packet hove in sight.

"Guess I'll go down and look at her freight and study the passengers," said the Chronicler, closing his note-book.

"I'll come too by the time she ties up. I'll bring my small sketch pad—I may see a 'moon-shiner' type—who knows?" and the Painter Man bent over his work again.

Paducah, like Cairo, seems to be an important port of trans-shipment. One could write a book

## ON THE OHIO

of quite human interest about the source and destination of the many currents of freight flowing up and down and into the ever-busy Ohio.

The following afternoon the Pathfinder reached the levee after a two-hour tramp over the town. For once he was ready for a bit of lunch; so, when he saw his friends he called out:

“Come over to the lunch wagon and have a hot frankfurter sandwich!”

Mrs. Pathfinder was both interested and amused with the idea of “taking afternoon tea at a hot sausage stand-up-lunch place,” as she expressed it.

But the place was neatly kept and the food and the fatherly man in charge were scrupulously clean. Lady patrons of his place were few and far between. Being a kindly old fellow, he was not at ease until he persuaded the lady to sit on a well-dusted cracker box that he had provided for her.

While the sandwiches were being prepared, a big three-decker ran swiftly in from mid-river and blew long blasts on her powerful “siren.”

“What boat is that?” we asked the lunch man.

“It’s the Evansville packet, I reckon—she’s due. If it’s her, I oughter have a call from ole ‘Butt,’ ’cause he done gimme the go-by las’ trip. . . . ‘Butt’s’ a goat, lady,” he finally explained, smiling in a paternal way as he handed

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her a sandwich, all befrilled with crisp leaves of lettuce.

The Painter Lady "adores" animals, so was instantly interested. Seeing this, the man went on: "'Butt' jumps off the boat before it's done tied up, if he can find a pile of freight high enough to jump from."

Sure enough, the steamer was still moving slowly alongside the wharf, when "Butt" came trotting and bleating up to the lunch stand.

The lady sought to beguile him with soft words, but the goat saw only his old friend with the delectable lettuce leaves in his hand. The leaves, it transpired, were not only offered as a welcome, but as a sort of peace offering, for if there were none forthcoming, the animal would gently butt and push and bleat until duly fed. Its appetite seemed unappeasable on this occasion; the Painter Lady, in great delight, bought so much lettuce for "Butt" that the Pathfinder, handing her another whole nickel, remarked:

"Remember, dear, that I still have to purchase our tickets to Pittsburg."

When the starting bell rang on his boat, "Butt" trotted on board, a handful of lettuce held unctuously between his teeth. Sometimes, it seems, he did not return to his boat, but would remain behind and lead a vagabond sort of life on the levee. That was where we had seen him

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the evening of our arrival, but not knowing his story, we had not missed him when his boat took him away during the night.

When the goat had gone, the men of our party decided that a glass of beer would be the very thing to finish washing down the sandwiches. The lower door of the saloon adjoined the lunch wagon, so they entered, saying, "Awfully sorry you can't come," to Mrs. Pathfinder.

"They will let you bring a glass of beer down for the lady," the lunch man called after them.

The saloon proprietor, a gentlemanly Kentuckian, having seen the Pathfinder during the plan-conference, now came forward with a pleasant word of greeting. He was introduced to the big Californian, who asked for information about an old-fashioned, distinguished-looking little house that we had admired on a pleasant old street near the river. The man was all interest at once.

"That, suh, is our Irvin Cobb's old home—I think he was born there, too."

Like millions of other readers of the *Saturday Evening Post*, we had learned to look for Irvin Cobb's humorous stories and articles. So he, too, was of this quaint and kindly Kentucky breed!

When we expressed interest and admiration for Mr. Cobb, the host answered: "Oh yes, we Paducah people are mighty proud of Irvin Cobb.

My place here is sometimes honoured by a call from him. He always looks and laughs at those old chromos on the wall just back of you."

We looked at them too. They were of the prolific vintage of the latter 'sixties—gaudy, extravagant in drawing and meretriciously dramatic. The famous steamboats "Robert E. Lee," "Vicksburg" and "Nashville" were depicted in a veritable red riot of night-racing for the speed honours of the bygone times. While the three "elbows" were being "crooked" for the third time, the proprietor told us a little story about Cobb.

"One day Mr. Cobb dropped in about lunch time for a drink and a rest for a troublesome corn. A patron of mine joked him about it and then went out. Around the corner he met one of my regular lunch customers heading this way. 'What's at the saloon to-day?' asked the hungry one with his mind on the lunch.

"'Corn on Cobb,' answered the other fellow, solemn as an owl—and walked on."

As they started to leave, the Painter, with a kindly thought for his fellow-artist outside, remarked to the Pathfinder, "It's too bad 'Meeks' (her Art School name) can't see these old chromos."

The quick courtesy of the Kentuckian prompted an instant invitation, and he said, "Call him in, sub, even if he *is* a teetotaller!"



## ON THE OHIO

The Pathfinder smiled broadly and replied:

"It's neither a 'he' nor a teetotaller—it's my wife."

"Then, suh, let me have the honah, suh, of her presence here—any lady could enter my place at any time and be sure of there being nothing to offend her."

So, with much trepidation and real thrills, the little lady was escorted in between her stalwart friend and teasing husband. Once she was safely within, she enjoyed, in a half-scared sort of way, her strange surroundings. "What a lovely 'rum-shop,'" she whispered.

From the chromos on the wall her glance took in three quiet, well-dressed men at the bar. "Oh," she whispered again, "they actually have their feet on the foot-rail that one sees 'taken off' so much by comedians on the stage."

Later when she stood outside quenching her thirst, she said:

"And did you see that satirical placard posted up behind the bar? It read: 'Spit on the floor if it makes you feel at *home*—otherwise don't *be* a hog.' My, wasn't that a hint and a half, though?"

Paducah has a modestly attractive residence section, the chief charms of which are the broad lawns, flowerful gardens and stately trees. The cottages, trees and gardens begin just a few

## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

short blocks away from the compact and well-built little business district.

What a delightful difference between the Paducah business man's leisurely stroll to his home—enjoying the air—and the mad, homeward rush through a stuffy subway of his New York brother-in-trade!

But, pleasing and soothing as are the river towns' suburbs, it was along the waterfront or the streets just back of it that the artists found their subjects. Here were colourful old houses of well-weathered brick or stone. Some of them antedating the 'sixties (of the nineteenth century). Now and then there would be a proud old house of the French Colonial type, all brave yet, with its balconies railed by arabesques of "iron-lace."

"Iron-lace," as a clever American magazinist aptly named it, is the very beautiful, ornamental ironwork that is the marvel of the thoughtful traveller strolling through the old French quarter of New Orleans. That cleverly tooled ironwork, and also its influence, we were to see in nearly all the older towns as we proceeded up-river. The early home builders of the prosperous old river ports had evidently admired it very much, and when they could not afford to buy it, they naïvely imitated it. The presence of the iron-lace was noted to within a few miles of

## ON THE OHIO

Wheeling, West Virginia, and served to show the great effect that a navigable waterway has on the early development of a new region.

There was a steamer going to Smithland next day, so the artists hurried down to the levee to finish their sketching and so be ready to go right on board when the boat arrived at two o'clock. The Pathfinder joined them with the baggage about one-thirty. The Painter Lady was all abubble with news.

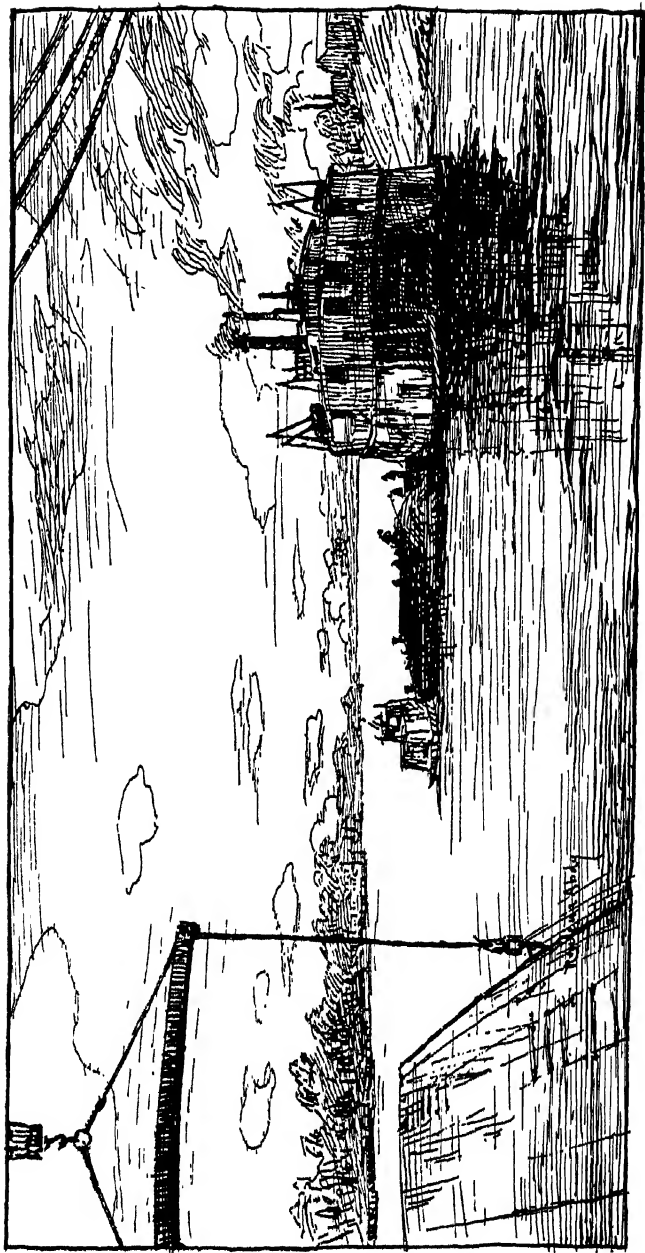
"No need to hurry—boat doesn't leave for an hour—check your baggage and come right back—something to tell you."

All this came disjointedly as she rapidly "painted in" a cluster of rowboats dozing under the lee of an anchored steamer's great stern wheel.

The latter part of the wifely orders had been given through clenched teeth, too, for she was holding her paint brush between them while she squeezed out another tube of paint.

When the Pathfinder returned and settled himself on a case of St. Louis lard by her side, she told her "wondrous story," as her husband teasingly referred to it.

It seemed that she had gone to the wharf-side with the other onlookers when the steamer was about to land. This was to be our boat to Smithland, so she had been mildly curious



"COALING," PADUCAH, KY.



## CAIRO AND PADUCAH

to look it over. It was a smart-looking craft and had a huge gang-plank rearing up in the air like the boats in the chromos. Suddenly a deep and enthusiastic voice had reached her ear, and addressed to her. The speaker was a good-looking, well-dressed man in his latter thirties; he held a big black cigar in the fingers of his right hand and with it he pointed to the boat.

"That's my boat," he was saying with boyish enthusiasm; "she's the 'Lowry'—a dandy—named for me, too! Oh—er—I'm Captain Lowry," he concluded, suddenly realizing that apparently he had addressed a strange lady.

The Painter Man now joined them and was told the incident of the captain.

"Yes," he commented, "I looked up from my work and watched the boat for a minute or so, and saw some one talking to our lady here—he's a jolly good fellow, I guess. Like enough we'll have a pleasant trip with him."

A line of roustabouts now formed and began to carry freight ashore. The captain had taken his stand on a pile of sacks in order to oversee the work and "drive" the darkies. He soon saw our party as we stood watching and bowed. Seeing that we were friendly, he jumped down in his quick, boyish way and came to us—smiling and apologetic—to be introduced.

## ON THE OHIO

He had been keeping his men moving steadily, but there was not the same "driving" as on the Mississippi boats. Evidently some things were done a little differently on the Ohio. Here, blunt, quick or "jollyng" orders were given; sometimes it would be a sort of annoyed admonishment; now and then it would be varied with a bit of brusque advice. All these forms of verbal prodding took the place on the Ohio of the snarled sarcasm or the drawled insult heard on the Mississippi.

But the momentary relaxation of the captain's "driving," while speaking to us, was seized upon by the darkies for a chance to "slow down." One of them actually stopped and began to fumble with his eye, and he was rubbing his big, floury fist (flour was being unloaded) into it when the captain whirled on him with:

"What's the matter with *you*, nigger John?"

The big six-footer slowly turned and whimpered:

"Cap'n, ah's done got sumpin in mah eye."

"Come here—let me look at it—and let that other laddiebuck keep a-goin'," referring to a would-be "good Samaritan," who plainly sought a surcease from toil by posing as an oculist. The huge fellow lumbered up to his captain. He stood like a child wishing to be comforted. He towered so much above the captain that the lat-

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ter, even when standing on tiptoe, could not see into the afflicted optic.

“Sit down, you—you—long, black rascal,” kicking a box towards the patient.

It was a stubborn case to relieve, and the great creature was almost ready to shed tears. Grinning fellow roustabouts offered facetious advice:

“Yo’ needs a crowbah to work on *dat* nigger’s eye, Cap’n.”

Other gibes were:

“Give up dat chunk o’ coal, John—der engineer man is lookin’ for it right now!” and, “Hey, you dere—don’t be a-stealin’ the white fo’kes’ time.”

The skipper finally succeeded in extracting the cinder and then sent the man along.

The captain was an interesting example of the shading off into the ways of the North. By his crisper manner, his harder tones and his quicker movements, his origin on the north bank of the Ohio was indicated beyond a doubt. And yet, there was that subtle, Southern tinge so noticeable in all the steamboat men.

The men of the Indiana shore to-day are just as delightfully tinctured with the mannerisms of the lovable Kentuckians as were the simple, kindly “Hoosiers” of a generation ago. And *they* have been immortalized by their own beloved poet,—James Whitcomb Riley.



## CHAPTER IV

### *Up the Cumberland*

Smithland, a Painter's Arcadia—Some Civil War History—  
A Trip up the Cumberland.

As the "Lowry" cast off from the Paducah wharfboat, we waved friendly farewells to the agent and the usual frequenters of the waterfronts, for we had grown to know them well with their easy, unobtrusive ways.

"Good-byes" being over, we toured the upper deck for novelties in this "crack" Evansville packet. We found *one*, anyway. A steamer was rounding the point of "Tennessee" Island, so the Painter Lady sat down to watch it.

"What funny boards," we heard her remark musingly, as she examined what she was seated on—a pile of painted planks that were, strangely enough, left standing in the middle of the promenade. We men turned to look. Two oblong holes about midway of the five-foot planks quite puzzled us.

"Five feet long, two inches thick and about eighteen inches wide. What the ——?" The Pathfinder—the "deductionizer"—was plainly

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“stumped” by a *plank*. The mate passed by—glared at the boards—and, stepping to the rail, bawled below:

“Hey there, somebody—you there, ‘Blobsy’—come up and put these life-preservers back where y’ got ’em!”

So they were life-preservers? The boards, it seems, are thrown overboard (or float around when the vessel sinks) so that the drowning man on the Ohio has something more substantial to clutch at than the traditional straw. He pulls this solid piece of plank under his “tummy”—slides along it like a joyous bullfrog—puts his fingers into the oblong holes, and hopes and “hollers” for help.

Although we knew that our next landing was on the Paducah side, yet we hoped that the “Lowry” might go well out into mid-river, so that we might obtain a closer view of the Illinois shore. But it used coal up faster to “buck” the mid-stream current—and coal costs money. So the boat was kept close under the two “Tennessee” islands which, together with the “Cumberland” one, form a sort of shield for the Kentucky shore between Paducah and Smithland.

The Ohio was too wide for us to see across with much clearness; our unaided eyes saw but a low, wooded shore-line, showing a very slight slope running back to the horizon. Aided by field

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glasses, we distinguished a church spire, and below it, through an opening in the screening trees, a white-cottaged village glowing softly in the sun. Out in mid-stream, passing up and down, were coal tows and other "through-traffic." Craft bound down usually ran in mid-river and moved swiftly and easefully under the steady push of the hurrying flood; steamers bound up kept closer inshore, paddling vigorously and steadily. Ahead of us a mile or so, a point of gleaming sand, backed by a wall of trees, came into view. From between the point and the mainland, there came a fine body of swirling water.

"The mouth of the Tennessee—I'll bet!" exclaimed the Pathfinder.

As the captain had promised to tell him when the boat reached that point, the latter looked back at the pilot-house for confirmation of his "find." The window opened and the Captain hailed him, smilingly:

"There's about where your Tennessee comes in," pointing not into the obvious opening, but farther up and over the tops of the trees.

"Oh, isn't that opening up there the mouth of it?"

"No, that's only the point of an island,—not the mainland,—the upper end of the island is so near the mouth of the river that the opening you're looking at *is* the main outlet and is used by

## UP THE CUMBERLAND

boats bound for Paducah—see, there's the Tennessee packet coming out now."

Sure enough, a swift little steamer was seen slipping smoothly into view from behind the point; she tooted in a neighbourly way to the "Lowry," as she passed out into the Ohio, just astern of us, and headed downstream.

We were due at Smithland by five o'clock; so, when a little after four we observed the boat slowly slanting-in closer to the Kentucky side, we waxed expectant. By four-thirty, we were quite close under the bank; though it ran right away under the eye as straight as a tightened string for two miles or more, we saw no signs, whatever, of a human habitation, much less a landing. Soon we became aware of a long wooded line of land (with the usual sandy tip) taking form far up on our left.

"That's the 'Cumberland' island, I guess," remarked the Pathfinder, sweeping it with the field glasses.

"Yes, but where's Smithland? You said it had an island in front of it," demanded the Painter Lady, wickedly trying to worry him.

"Yes, I did say that, but please don't imply that I have maliciously picked up Smithland and misplaced it."

While they thus playfully quarrelled, the captain came up to them and, pointing to a noble

## ON THE OHIO

group of trees just ahead, remarked: "There's Smithland under the trees yonder."

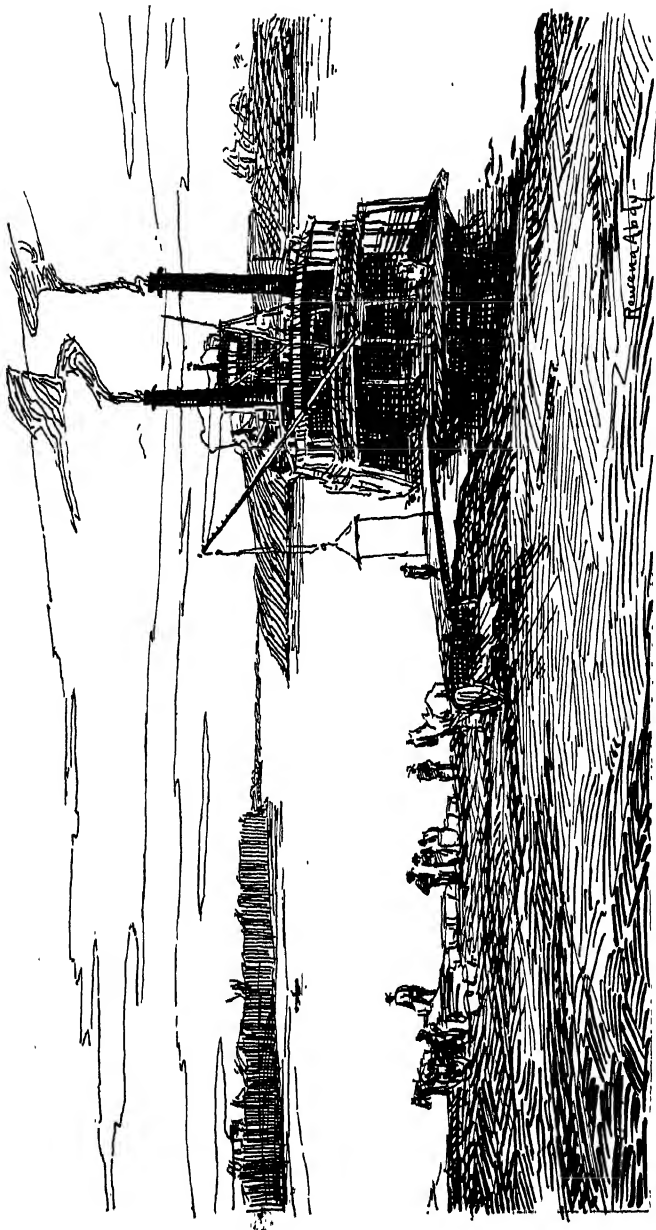
"Then, this is not the entrance to the Cumberland?"

"Yes, it's the entrance, but not the mouth—as in the Tennessee case; we have been 'bucking' the Cumberland's current for two miles. The Ohio water coming in through the 'cut' at the upper end of that island over there, shoves the water of the other river against this bank."

"O—h" (very flat in tone), "I see-e-e;—not the main door—but the—the—I have it—the *vestibule!*"

We fell in love with Smithland at first sight. It was a village,—simply and delightfully a village!—and it proved to be, later, just the Arcadia that our first impressions led us to expect.

At the landing-place there was not even the slightest pretence of a wharfboat,—only a steep, rough and pebbly bank to land on—that was all. A road ran along the top of it and received shade and beauty from a row of lofty old trees and some half-dozen colourful old brick houses. Back from this river-side road, one could see, from the high deck of the steamboat as it approached the town, that there were but two or three lane-like streets, all of them smiling, as it were, with quaint and comfortable cottages. Here and there, mansion-



THE LANDING, SMITHLAND, KY.



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like houses of brick and stone occupied whole half-blocks, and, surrounding some of them, were generously outspread half-wild gardens or small grassy paddocks wherein grazed the family horse or contented, ruminant cow.

"It's just the place we are looking for, don't you think?" remarked the big man to his fellow-artist.

"Oh, it's a dream!—see that group of lovely old houses on the road above the landing? Well—hands off, sir—that's going to be my very first subject."

A horse and buggy now rattled and bounced down the rough irregular trail that led to the landing-place; a familiar figure soon stood up in the vehicle and joyously waved a whip. It was the Colonel.

"Well, I see you got my letter all right!" the Pathfinder called out to him, as we all returned the whip salutation.

The great stage was now being lowered, so we ceased our fascinated survey from the upper deck and ran below and ashore just as the porter dumped our baggage on the bank.

"Well, what do you think of my little old town?" queried the Colonel as we all shook hands.

"Well, for my part," answered the Pathfinder, "I find it much more sheltered than most of the



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river towns. The island in front of it and the high ridge back of it make a regular 'snug harbour.' ”

“Yes,” put in the Painter Man, “it’s all—and more than we expected.”

The Colonel had mapped out a definite program for our reception, it transpired, for the Painter Lady was placed in the buggy and taken to the bank top, where motherly Mrs. Colonel was waiting to drive away with her.

The Colonel, in his self-appointed position as Director-General, was now calling loudly towards a group of youths on the bank above (who were trying to be a “crowded throng”) and asking if they could see “Vanus Moxley an’ his c’yart a-comin’.”

“Nare a sign, suh,” one lanky lad piped back.

“I’ll bet Vanus is a ducky,” said the Pathfinder to the Painter, in an aside.

While the Colonel engaged one of the grinning idlers as a messenger to go quickly forth and seize Vanus and bring him dead or alive, the two Californians studied the great grey cliff from around which swung the Cumberland.

“The mouth—at last!” exclaimed the Pathfinder in mock-melodramatic tones.

The mouth of the tributary was about a hundred yards above the landing and seemed to be all of eighty yards across, and a good, steady volume

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of yellowish water surged out, eddying into the wider spaces of the broad Ohio.

Vanus Moxley and his cart, drawn haltingly by an ancient mule, were now bumping down the slope to the landing-place.

Vanus (Sylvanus, in full, if you please) was a short, powerfully built coloured man, rather under middle age. He smiled beguilingly at us when the Colonel, in his pretended excoriation of the black man's tardiness, asked the latter, in a paternal, grieved-to-the-heart tone:

"Ain't you done got no regard for yore standin' as a business man of this h'yar community? You-all are the Express and Transfer Company of this, the county seat of Scott County, Kentucky. What'll the new white folks think o' ye?"

Vanus' quaint vehicle, on which he was now rather sheepishly piling our baggage, was his own practical and clever combination of cart, wagon and dray. Stout oaken stakes set in sockets did duty as sides and tail-gate. Other stakes could be set in holes, so cunningly spaced in the floor of the cart that a load of any size or shape could instantly be made secure. In consequence, Vanus and his mate, the mule, could safely haul anything within the animal's capacity, be it a box of bottles for the druggist or a load of millstones for the miller up the creek.

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With all our belongings thus disposed of, we three followed Vanus and the mule.

The Colonel came near losing his Californians several times *en route*, for they would either dart up a cross-lane to look at a picturesque old house, or stop and look over the fence to see an attractive garden, or—tell it not in Gath—an equally attractive, sunbonneted maid.

There being no hotels in the village, the Colonel had secured rooms for us with an elderly Kentuckian and his wife, who kept a modest little boarding-house. Our quarters were clean, though simple to a degree, and the kindly old couple did all they could for our comfort. But the Painter Lady's face was surely a study when she was shown, on the back porch, a tin basin on a board and told naïvely that she might "wash-up" there!

But she was game, and splashed almost as manfully as the "hired man," engaged with the adjoining basin!

At supper the painter folk, on the *qui vive* for some new article of food, exchanged beatific glances when their teeth sank into the Southern "fried chicken." Fried apples, hominy and "hot bread" supplemented the toothsome capon. With breakfast came some more fried chicken, fried apples and—for a variation—fried eggs! This gastronomic history was repeated for supper after a merciful interlude of chickenless lunch!

## UP THE CUMBERLAND

Immediately after supper on the evening of our arrival, we hurried out into the picturesque streets and lanes while it was yet early twilight. As we strolled along, the Painter Lady recounted her experiences after leaving us at the landing.

The gentle old lady had taken the carriage and, it seems, driven through all the village streets to show off her guest as in a Roman triumph! She then took the artist to see their home, a spacious old mansion, commandingly set on the edge of the precipitous cliff that stands sentinel at the water-gate of the Cumberland.

"Well, what do you artists think of the Colonel's town, is it paintable?" asked the Pathfinder as the party returned and stood by the gate of their new home.

"*I* think it is far too quaint and lovely a village to be given the name of 'Smithland,'" remarked the Painter Lady with a note of regret in her voice. Her friends instantly agreed with her.

"We artists have just been saying, Billabdy, that we thought we had better tell you, at once, about an agreement that we had come to. We think it would be best not to stay here more than two, or at the most three, days."

"Two days," echoed the Pathfinder, "why, I expected to stay a week!"

It was then explained to the poor layman that

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not *one* week but six could be spent there, painting every day, too. As a result of that decision, we shortened our stay, but with the settled determination to return in two or three years and remain there several months. However, we virtuously resolved to work both early and late while we were there, so we told the housewife that we would take breakfast with the earliest of her boarders.

Behold us then, next day, while the mists of the early morn were yet draped o'er the land, trying to hurry, just a little, through the morning meal. We found, however, that we were being politely restrained from so doing by our half-scandalized hostess, who begged us not to hurry away full of *cold* biscuit, but to wait for more hot ones—a third batch of which were ready to be drawn from the oven. The matter seemed of only secondary importance to us, on that our first morning in a Southern household. But in time we came to realize that in attempting to leave the table before the third batch of hot biscuit had been served we had been innocently breaking an unwritten law as inexorable as that which governs the “precession of the equinoxes”! Hot biscuits served with every meal were only an amusing novelty to the Californians, but to the Kentuckians they were almost a sacred rite! If the heedless strangers from the Far West, in the depths of their

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ignorance, sought to take a cold biscuit, while another serving of hot ones was being brought pridefully from the oven, the thoughtless hand would be lightly checked by word or touch. With a gentle, tolerant scorn, they would be admonished something like this:

“Lawsy, mist’h, them’s plumb cold,—wait, the hot y’uns air a-comin’.”

Even a biscuit that seemed almost hot to us would be dismissed from consideration as being “plumb” cold.

After our biscuitful breakfast, the artists went joyously to work, while the Chronicler, called for by the Colonel, was shown about the village,—the “business district” of which seemed to consist, chiefly, of four small stores and a tiny bank.

But the chief glory of the old place was its picturesque old houses, both large and small. Of the former there were several that had, no doubt, been quite imposing in the prosperous, busy Past; for the settlement had been an important river port in ante-bellum times. Its location at the confluence of two important, navigable rivers was no doubt the chief factor for its founding in the days when nearly all traffic in mid-continent was water-borne.

So, though Smithland had not come into being as an accident, some change in the current of commerce had now made it a sort of commercial

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anachronism. But it was a *delightful* anachronism,—a bit of outlived Yesterday in many ways. One of them was the paternal, before-the-Freedom attitude of the kindly whites towards the simple blacks. Each race seemed to know, exactly, its relation to the other in the scheme of life as lived in their own peaceful village, and each race seemed helpful to the other in the larger way of life.

From what source the inhabitants derived even *their* modest incomes we of the West were at a loss to guess. The farms that peeped over the edge of the wooded ridge back of the village did not seem to be of sufficient size or fertility to be much of a factor. We mentioned this to the Colonel (delicately, as one should to so devoted a lover of his native place).

“Oh, I dunno,” he said thoughtfully. “Well,” with a sudden idea, “you see, it’s the county seat.”

An hour later, the Pathfinder, left to his own devices, ran across the Painter Lady fairly reveling in the creation of a water colour, the subject of which was a beautiful group of old cottages near the courthouse.

“Even I can see how paintable these old buildings are,—I suppose the tree-shaded courthouse will be your next subject?”

“Courthouse?” echoed the Painter Man from

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across the grassy lane. "Don't—don't remind me that this is a county seat—it's such a joke!"

"Not only that," interposed the Painter Lady, streaking-in her foreground, "it is to paintable villages like this that all good artists would want to come when they die—but wicked artists——"

"I see, I see," broke in the Pathfinder when she paused, "but all wicked artists *could* be punished by being sent to—to—well—to the average county seat!"

After lunch, while the artists were sprawling energetically (?) under the trees in the grassy front-yard, the Pathfinder cast aside *his* Indian-summer laziness and went forth, resolutely, to explore along the village waterfront.

Time was when a heavy spring freshet had laid bare much of the root system of the fine old trees there, and forced the tenants of the houses up to the second floor. We strangers, seeing the quiet waters purling and swirling lazily along fifty feet below, like a sleepy cat, could not imagine them either tigerishly tearing by or oozing through the lower windows of the homes high on that lofty bank!

One short row of these houses had some beautiful examples of late colonial doorways and brickwork—checkered brickwork of red and black. This particular group had fascinated the Painter



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Lady even before she set foot ashore from the steamer's deck, and they were the last that she waved "good-bye" to on the day of our departure. She found, too, many months later, that her water-colour sketch of them was a steady favourite with the visitors to her California studio. Soon, it went away with a lovely lady in a limousine, and the little Painter Lady yearned for it as for a "firstborn."

The tenants of the houses on the bank above the landing had quite a strategic position, for they could see straight out through the "cut" to the Ohio, up into the mouth of the Cumberland, and down the wide channel between the bank and the island. Through that channel flowed all the Cumberland's water and part of the Ohio's.

The actual point of confluence of the two rivers was under a twenty-foot bluff of gravelly earth. Down one side of it came the Cumberland with a quick, boyish swagger and ran into eddying conflict with the heavier current of the larger stream; for even the "cut" carried a flood of greater volume than did the smaller river, despite the latter's half-thousand miles of length. About one hundred yards up the tributary there falls a gentle slope, making a model landing for the ferry. This was Adams' Ferry of the Cumberland.

Early pathfinders, seeking a way westward

## UP THE CUMBERLAND

through the then trackless wilderness, had availed themselves of the ferriable point, and one Adams had been content to remain there and establish both a ferry and a farm. Time, and many distinguished personages, had made it famous. What volumes of history it had helped to make by ferrying over brave companies of pioneers on their way to aid in the winning of the West!

Just now as the Pathfinder gazed across, his mind deeply pondering the history of the ancient ferry, a horseman trotted down to the water's edge and "hoo-hoo-ed" for the ferryman. So unimportant had the once busy ferry become, that only a lanky coloured youth was in charge; and even he was playing out in mid-stream with a little bateau in which some local inventor had installed a foot-power stern wheel run by an old bicycle.

When the boy had reached mid-stream with his passenger, the latter broke the strange silence of the place by asking:

"What-fer contraption is *that* you had, boy?"

The lad's reply could not be distinctly heard, for his voice had not the curious carrying power of the other's.

When the horseman landed, the Pathfinder found him so unusual in appearance, that it was hard to refrain from too obvious a scrutiny. The quaint-looking fellow had long hair, a faded

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slouch hat, homespun clothes and a tousled, iron-grey beard. Attached to each side of the saddle were leathern saddle bags, once handsomely carved, but now crumpled and cracked with use and age. Verily, he was a true son of the Cumberland, being, like Smithland, a bit of Yesterday.

Straight up from the village side of the ferry rose the great stone cliff, the gigantic post on which is swung the door of the Cumberland. Ascending a goat trail up its rocky face, the Pathfinder found himself, presently, on the Colonel's lawn. The latter was at home and was soon taking his guest about his spacious old place, and pointing out the noble prospect from its lofty site. The Colonel showed the room and the bed in which he had been born; also the home-made cradle in which he had been rocked during his "crying needs" of colic or his sleepy times of peace. He told of a later time when, as a little boy, he had looked with awe and wonder from his bedroom window at the earthen redoubt being constructed on the nearby ridge by the Confederate artillerymen. The men worked night and day, for the fort was to guard the mouth of the Cumberland and prevent the passage into it of the expected Yankee gunboats.

"They looked for the gunboats to come through the 'cut' yonder," pointing over the edge of the

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cliff, "and I can just about remember seeing the gunboats come a-driftin' along, quiet an' easy-like, right down the middle of it. There warn't no firin' from the fo't, an' I've often wondered why. F'ather he climbs up this persimmon tree"—patting its big rough trunk—"it warn't so big then—and he fastened the Stars and Stripes near the top, while Ma and I stood on the old porch. I was a-holdin' onto her dress and she was hollerin' to Pa to hurry down as the boats might shoot 'just for luck.'

"Well,"—mopping his brow,—“they didn't shoot when they saw the flag, but they was pretty plague-on cautious, I'm tellin' ye! Afterwards, when a young lieutenant and a squad of men came up to investigate, he told Pa that the captain was afeared it might be a trick or somethin'—he didn't expect to see the Union flag a-welcomin' his little fleet,—not at the mouth of the Cumberland, anyway.”

“So your father had Northern sympathies?”

“Yes, Pa's folks were Yankees from New York State, but he was raised in Marietta, way up the river from here, in Ohio.”

Here came a great racket from the barn, and the Colonel started over there to investigate.

“'Scuse me,—I'll be back in a few minutes. I've got more to tell you,” he said as he ran off.

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The Pathfinder stepped close to the edge of the cliff and gazed far down to the brown surface of the river. He pondered. Back across from the wide fields of Memory came his school-history lesson about the gunboat expedition up the Cumberland. How he had dreamed boyish daydreams—dreams of a coming time when he would take a boat at Pittsburg and “sail clear down to New Orleans,” stopping off at historic points on the way. And now the dream was being partly realized. Here was the Cumberland, and here was the boy. More fascinating still, he had been talking to another boy who had actually stood right on the spot—this spot—and had seen in the making that particular bit of American history!

Soon the host rejoined his guest.

“I meant to tell you,” he began, “that the commander of the expedition came up to the house, later on, and had a long talk with Pa about the channel of the Cumberland. When he found that Pa knowed every bar and pass between here and Nashville, he hired him to pilot the gunboats up the river.”

As the Pathfinder sauntered thoughtfully down to the village, he became aware that the Indian-summer afternoon was quite warm. He stepped into a long, rambling shop and quaffed a brimming bumper of Mr. Bryan’s joke-worn grape juice. The beverage, cooled with shaved ice, was very

## UP THE CUMBERLAND

refreshing, so the Pathfinder, suspecting that the artists were also sore athirst somewhere nearby, decided to agreeably surprise them by suddenly appearing to them around the corner, bearing aloft a well-filled tray of cooling drinks.

He reached the corner and peered cautiously around it in order to appear with dramatic suddenness. But alas, there were no artists in sight, and the drinkables were half spilled already!

"Dey *was* yere, sah," said a coloured washer-woman, speaking over the nearest fence when appealed to for information. The woman, wishing to be of further service, called out to ask her mistress if she "noticed dem pictur-makin' white fo'kes go 'way?"

All this time the Pathfinder held tightly to his tray of rather skittish glasses, and in so doing showed more strength of grip than grace of pose. In fact, he must have looked comically like those stiff-armed figures in an Egyptian frieze!

No, the mistress had not seen the artists, but her little girl had, and the latter was even now being called home from across the street to impart the required information. For the fifth time, the tray bearer shifted to the "other" foot. With the little girl (who now offered to lead the gentleman to his friends) came a troop of other children. The latter grouped themselves about the Pathfinder in more or less abashed curiosity.

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Also, the washerwoman, thrilled by the unwonted excitement, was still holding in her hand the white garment she was washing when interrupted and which, manlike, *he* had not noticed until her horrified mistress surreptitiously snatched it away out of sight.

Now came more children, and they ran up shouting: "A runaway—a runaway!" That was evidently the most thrilling excitement that could happen in Smithland! Led by the little girl, the tray of tall claret-coloured glasses moved slowly onward. A retinue of children fell into line behind, quietly and respectfully, like nice Southern children, but nevertheless quite determined to see the final scene of the most amusing comedy ever acted on their village streets.

Half a block, half a block onward, that tray bearer staggered and blundered!—Seen by a growing crowd that followed and wondered!

At last!—there were the artists sketching in a grassy old side lane. And they, hearing the noise, afar off, of the approaching multitude, stood up to survey the scene, their brushes halted in mid-air between palette and canvas. For a moment they could not decide whether their Chief Guide and Counsellor was doing a bit of balancing vaudeville or had turned into a sort of Pied Piper leading his followers to some untimely end. On seeing even what remained of the drinks, they

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promptly decided that although he was a "*good Samaritan*" he was also a rather *foolish* one!

That night closed in soft and balmy; so, after an excellent supper of roast chicken and baked sweet potatoes, we strolled forth in search of adventure. The streets were wrapped in a pleasant, velvety darkness, slightly relieved, here and there, by the cheerful lamp and candle light coming from the cottages.

The objective point of our evening stroll was a line of benches on the bank of the river in front of the postoffice and stores. We had expected to find the place deserted—but lo, we found it was as much the centre of after-dinner life as it was the focal point for gossiping idlers during the day. At night it was weird and mysterious, for the only bit of illumination was a slender bar of soft, orange-coloured lamplight that streamed from the open door of the postoffice. Two figures sat at either edge of this stream of light,—one being that of the postmaster waiting for a belated mail.

Thinking that these two were all, we stepped out of the light to sit on the other benches, but again we were surprised, for they, too, were full of dimly outlined figures, whose locations were indicated only by the glowing end of a lighted cigar or fitful sparks from a trusty pipe. Whatever



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conversation had been held prior to our coming, there was none now, and the throbbing silence of a "Quaker meeting" was only relieved by the sibilant sound of occasional expectorations. All the smokers arose and politely offered us their places. However, by everybody sitting up close, there proved to be plenty of room for all of us. Dead silence again.

The Painter Man, wishing to join the smoke-battalion, found that he had no tobacco. He started for the shop to buy some, but the proprietor in a friendly drawling voice dissuaded him—preferring to *give away* the tobacco in his pocket to being disturbed by going into his shop to *sell* it!

These villagers did not seem to have any of the traditional curiosity of such folk, for no one tried even the gentlest quizzing of the strangers. The fact that they were Southerners probably accounts for it.

Presently, the subject of the Great War came up. The Painter Man joined in enough to remark that the battle reported in the morning paper was being fought over his old sketching ground in Belgium. Thereupon, the Pathfinder, seeing the villagers vastly interested, added also the experiences of Mrs. Pathfinder and himself at Compiègne in southern Picardy. There they had watched a happy wedding party near the old

## UP THE CUMBERLAND

castle of Pierrefonds which they had gone forth to sketch. Two years later the place became a shambles, as two great armies fought hand-to-hand for the possession of the castle and the region roundabout.

Another silence followed, broken only by the occasional striking of a match. Then, from a bench farther down the road, came sudden sounds of youthful voices, followed soon by the plaintive tingling of a Jew's harp. Now, a bell-like tenor voice welled up from some black boy's throat, and our ears drank in as sweet a melody as once on a moonlight night we had heard on the banks of the Arno in faraway Florence.

The quietness that followed the generous applause from the "white folks" was suddenly disturbed by three loud blasts from a steamboat that had slipped quietly up to a point just beneath the bank.

The coloured youths, just as fascinated by a steamboat as were their "daddies" before them, could be heard shouting and laughing as they ran down to the landing to see the boat come in. We wanted to go, too, but as the people about us did not stir, we restrained ourselves. Evidently, it "wasn't done."

"It's the Nashville packet upbound from Padukey," vouchsafed some one near us.

The splashing of her stern wheel as she passed

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The splashing of her stern wheel as she passed

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came up to us from the darkness of the river. A moment later the lighted decks of the cabins appeared throwing a soft radiance on the waters all about her. Out of the stacks rolled black smoke, streaked with leaping red tongues of flame. Swish! the searchlight was "spotting" the landing. "Jinge-ingle," tinkled a bell, and the engine stopped. Simultaneously, the flames died down in the stacks and the steam pipes began to hiss out unneeded steam. A name was shouted from the boat, asking if that person was at the landing.

"No," chorused the group addressed, and fingers at the ends of outstretched arms jabbed at the darkness in our direction. One yelled out: "He's up dar." Swish! the brilliant beam of light hit right on our group and a megaphoned voice roared:

"Hey you, Ed, here's your molasses!"

A storekeeper jumped up, exclaiming: "Jiminy crickets! that's for me," and stumbled off towards the landing. The searchlight picked up his moving figure and, beautifully timed, lighted the way just in front of him as easily as a carried lantern.

"Oh, come on, let *us* play the rôle of landing loafers," whispered the Painter Man.

"Yes, *I* want to know how it feels to be stared at by a row of passengers lining the rail," agreed the Pathfinder.

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"Good-night," we said to our fellow-benchers.

"Good-night, you-all," came the reply.

Next morning we again played the part of landing loafers, for we were members of quite a goodly company grouped on the bank waiting for the "Lowry" to lower her gang-plank. The occasion was a Sunday excursion up the Cumberland, and when the steamer reached the landing her upper decks were lined with excursionists from Paducah. And how they did stare at us! We learned how it felt *that* time, all right! Laughing and pushing we went on board. When our boat backed away from the bank, many farewells were waved from people at the doors and windows of the old houses overlooking the landing. As the "Lowry" passed beneath the rocky face of the Colonel's cliff, her splashing stern wheel brought out such loud echoes that it at first startled and then greatly interested the otherwise mildly blasé "city" excursionists.

We three returned the friendly signals of the Colonel and his wife, as they stood on the edge of the rocks far overhead, outlined against the sky. Turning, we found everybody on our deck gayly waving at the dear old couple, too.

The "Lowry" made a short turn around the cliff, and lo, the Cumberland, curving and bending, spread out before us its long, narrow valley in unhindered view. Somehow, it seemed to beckon us

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to go up, up, up,—up through Kentucky and on into the heart of Tennessee! Some day we may yield to that beckoning!

The recent rains had evidently taken heavy toll of the gentle slopes of the river's water-head, for the stream was heavy with a tan-coloured sediment. Ten miles or so up-river we made our first landing. It proved to be one of many pleasant hamlets and villages at which our "excursion" steamer stopped,—for *freight*. Sometimes there was no village, but only a water-side shed at which we tied up for a few moments and left some small shipment.

Only one of the villages assumed the dignity of a levee; it was even *boulder-paved* and furnished with mooring rings set in huge blocks of stone. The old church behind the bank was built of this stone, as were most of the houses. The tiny town was rather European in its air of permanence, for stone as a building material does really give a much richer sense of "personality" to a place than do clapboards and shingles. It was at that populous little landing that the Painter Man succeeded, after several vain attempts, in getting up a mild flirtation with a bevy of village girls on the bank. Evidently, our excursion, with many well-dressed "city folks" on board, was the chief sensation of an otherwise piously dull Sabbath; for these good folk of "Dixie" still wear the serious

## UP THE CUMBERLAND

Sunday faces of earlier days. The Californians of to-day, however, have joyously discarded them.

The people of this particular landing had doubtless heard through the telephone of the excursion feature of the "Lowry's" trip. The time of our arrival at this little place being after "church" and after "dinner," we found everybody at the levee. The women and girls were in their best frocks of muslin, gingham or bright-coloured calicoes. But, alas for the artist's flirtatious designs, the village girls were conspicuously decorous in their deportment.

The big, happy-hearted Californian noted this with a pitying eye. "Poor little maids,—I'll give 'em a *chance* to be naughty, anyway," he said, as he singled out a village "peach" and flirted nicely from the lofty heights of the upper deck and his own six-feet-four. Not a move! Nothing daunted, he smiled and tried again. Ah! there was a slight stir and bunching together of pretty heads in the thrills of whispering. Some gave half-affrighted glances over shoulder curls, first at the elders grouped about and then at the bold, bad, boyish fellow on the boat. Their excitement, though suppressed, increased. A younger lassie giggled and was promptly subdued.

"It's no use, boy," remarked the Pathfinder sympathetically, for he, as a Northern youth, had spent several years among the Southern girls,



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"It's no use," he continued, "the Southern girl has been 'coached,' drilled and dragooned into the belief that she should not flirt with strangers."

"By the Lord Harry!" laughed the Painter Man, "they must fear that I might leap through the air and Bluebeard every last one of them!"

The Painter Lady, who is a good little "sport," joined the two men and said to her big friend:

"Now, when the boat leaves the landing, I'll stand close beside you and we will wave together,—that may reassure them. I can see that the poor things want to flirt a bit, but they are either afraid or don't know how."

That she knew her sex, even if they were rural Kentuckians, the sequel proved; for, with the boat well clear of the levee, she said, "Now," to her pupil, and lo! the girl who had giggled waved a half-hesitating hand in farewell and then called out a soft, drawly "Good-bye, you-all."

Leaping upon the rail like a slender youth, the bad man bowed like Chesterfield and roared across: "Hooray for *you*, little girl—good-bye from a wild and woolly Californian!" A perfect flutter of hands and kerchiefs responded. "Victory!" beamed the Painter Man. "Yes, suh, but you had an able general, suh," laughingly interposed a soldierly old "Colonel" as he bowed to the Painter Lady.

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"You've got 'em going, old man," put in the Pathfinder, nodding his head in the direction of the bevy of girls, who were now running, skipping and giggling along the levee top and trying to keep pace with the boat.

The "Lowry" proceeded up-river for two or three miles and then found such a swift swirl of current around a bend that her powerful stern wheel had a hard time pushing her through it. Once around the point, we found ourselves at a compact little landing with a large substantial farmhouse and numerous smaller buildings clustered about the immediate vicinity. Broad, rolling acres of orchard, field and meadow bespoke an ante-bellum plantation.

The Pathfinder consulted the printed list of landings given to him by the captain.

"Ah hah," he muttered softly, as one seeing a "light." "To speak in book-English," he began, with a quizzical smile, "this is the old plantation on which, as a more or less carefree slave, lived and toiled the father of Vanus Moxley, Smithland's one and only charioteer."

The Painter Man grinned.

"Where d'you get that stuff?" he demanded, using slang for sheer wickedness.

The Pathfinder smiled and went on:

"Slaves frequently took the names of their kinder and more permanent masters. This is

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Moxley's landing and that is the old Moxley plantation."

"I wish we could meet a real old-time slave somewhere," commented the Painter Lady.

"Well, there's just a bare chance that we may," was the encouraging reply.

As we went on up-river, so many stops were made that we murmured among ourselves exceedingly, and said: "Lo, this is a freight-delivering trip in the main and an excursion 'on the side'!"

Even the presence on board, "in state" as it were, of the captain's "best girl" did not deter him from accepting freight wherever offered. And such freight it was! Cattle of all kinds. Each poor, frightened beast brought on board its own bellow, squeal, or bleat of remonstrance; each beast its own smell. Cattle "runs" were fashioned of small gate-like sections of fence, and extended from the boat's deck to well up the bank. Into the mouth of the "run" the beasts would be herded, and then would come the struggle; for they frequently took freight at the shoutings and proddings of the roustabouts who sought to keep them moving towards the boat. Sometimes a stubborn pig had to be seized by several men and carried on board, squealing so piercingly that the ladies would put their hands over their ears. Once we took on board some nervous, but dignified Ken-

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tucky thoroughbreds; such beautiful horses they were! Another time a big, good-natured bull was manoeuvred into the "run," leading his retinue of cows and calves. Hardly had he gotten started when some fool of a fellow let out a quite unnecessary yell. That poor brute went insane with fright! Roaring, plunging and horning with lowered head, it forced its way over the bodies of its followers and out into liberty, dashing with wild bellowings out of sight into the fields beyond. That delayed us just one hour!

While we stood there chafing at the delay—the silence broken only by the distant yells of the captain and crew in pursuit of the runaway—the smart white-jacketed coloured steward came along muttering in disgust at the long wait. He did not notice the lady of our party, sitting, as she was, behind the big Californian, so he went on growling: "Hain't they done cotched that bu—er-um (seeing the lady)—dat *ceow-brute* yit?"

We assured him there was as yet no sign of such success. He glanced at his watch. "Ef der cap'n doan't watch eout, he's a-goin' to have to serve *suppah* to the white fo'kes."

That was what *we* were worrying about, also; for the lunch had been rather scanty—a sort of "picnic lunch," of a truth! The steward ambled off, remarking with a grin:

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“Well, Ah reck’n Ah’d bettah run right along and scamp up *somethin’* fer suppah.”

He had gone but a few paces when he turned to ventilate a new complaint:

“It’s all on ’count o’ them Evansville levee lo’fers—the cap’n was fo’ced to hire dem fool niggahs—*real* roustabouts kin han’le cattle widout makin’ ’em onery.”

The “ceow-brute” was finally roped and brought in with quiet words and pattings on his steaming flanks, and the boat moved on from what proved to be the last landing. Despite the stops for freight, we were glad we saw that forty miles of the gently rolling Cumberland country and glimpsed its river life. We laughed later, as we recalled the amusing variety of freight we picked up; for it ranged from a drove of valuable horses to one lone jug of whiskey! The setting ashore of that whiskey is really worth describing. As the boat entered a broad straight reach of river, and we expected a burst of speed, there came a blast from the whistle and we slowed up. There was no landing in sight—nothing but steep, willow-grown banks on either side. The “Lowry” came to a stop abreast of a footpath coming down the bank through the bushes. The pilot gave the engineer the hold-her-against-the-current “jingle,” and we waited in silence.

Silence, with no sign of human life ashore. The

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twittering of reedbirds in the willows all about us sounded strangely unreal to our ears, accustomed now to the noises of the boat. Repeated roars from the whistle. The silence persisted. "Nobody home," grinned a wag from Paducah, who leaned over the rail near us. Evidently some one was expected to dash down the path,—but nobody dashed.

"See anybody, Mister Brown?"—the question came from the mate on the freight deck below.

"Nope, I guess that last jug done killed 'im," mumbled the pilot in whimsical disgust.

The captain, tearing himself away from the side of Beauty, called out:

"Let one of the niggers set the jug ashore,—an' let's go."

This was done, and with a series of short blasts of the fog horn, we were on our way again.

Presently, looking back, we saw the head and shoulders of a man apparently on horseback. It was the belated consignee, and he was waving extravagant thanks, for the safe delivery of his "co'n licker," no doubt.

We saw but one boat on that trip. It was the inevitable Nashville packet, a smart-looking but rather small craft, crowded with freight and passengers. The people of both boats exchanged lively salutes, and the pilots tooted their respective whistles.

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We reached home in time for a late supper, but we had vastly preferred to wait that extra half-hour and eat our own fried apples and fried chickens.

That night we regretfully packed our belongings, for we were to leave on the "Lowry" next morning for Evansville, Indiana, a hundred and thirty-five miles farther up the Ohio.

Quite a group of our new-found friends and other villagers were at the landing to bid us "good-bye," but the genial Colonel was the last one to whom we waved. How we had revelled in the Arcadian simplicity of that picturesquely decayed old river town!

"I hope we can return here some day, repair one of those old brick mansions, and live in it a whole year!" exclaimed the Painter Lady.

"So do we," agreed the others, as we turned away and faced our new adventure.

## CHAPTER V

### *A Crooked River and a Change of Plans*

A "Fraunces' Tavern"—Pigs and Passengers—A Crooked River and a Change of Plans—Quaint Place Names—Two Aged and Wounded Sycamore Trees.

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*In Memoriam*

JOYCE KILMER

SOLDIER POET

*Died on a battlefield in France*

1918

[NOTE BY AUTHOR. I, too, love trees. Comes to me much inspiration therefrom. The sycamores in this chapter were written about long before I had the pleasure of reading Kilmer's "Trees," which I introduce into this chapter-heading as a modest tribute to his memory.—H. B. A.]

#### TREES \*

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.  
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;  
A tree that looks at God all day,  
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;  
A tree that may in summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;  
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.  
Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.

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THE "Lowry" pushed steadily through the  
"cut," meeting quite a current. "Cumberland"

\*Reprinted by courtesy of the publishers from "Poems of Joyce Kilmer," copyrighted, 1914, by George H. Doran Company



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island, on our left, being only long and narrow, was soon passed. Standing at our favourite point, the forward flagstaff, we studied the new contour of the land that was being unfolded as we drew clear of Smithland and its trees.

. The great cliff that guarded the mouth of the Cumberland and the wooded ridge back of it were the first uplands we saw rising above the vast floor of North America's great mid-continental valley, east of the Mississippi.

Far ahead, bold hills came right down to the Kentucky bank; here and there on the wooded slopes lifted so frankly to the sun were fertile-looking clearings dotted with grey groups of pleasant farmsteads. Hills!—until now we had not realized that, subconsciously, we had really been longing to see even a small one once more. Ah, those hills!—they were the far-flung western root-lets of the great Appalachian range, the great mountain wall from whose wooded slopes spring the fountains of the Ohio! Our Appalachians! From their Adirondack outposts on the river of sub-arctic snows (the St. Lawrence), they lift their wooded, blue-black summits in an unbroken chain until, having served their purpose, they modestly lose themselves as simple sandhills in sub-tropic Florida. Oh, the wonderful mountain walls that protect this great land! See 'the mighty "Rockies" in mid-continent bracing, with their

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broad backbone, the Atlantic Appalachians and the Pacific Sierras as they stand, steadfast barriers, against the floods of both great oceans! And this—all this—that the vast and fruitful continent sheltered in between may be the settled home of Man;—a peaceful Home wherein to carry out the Divine Intention,—whatever that should be.

The Pathfinder told the artists that the Appalachians were old friends of his.

Weeks later, when our Pittsburg-to-Washington express was poised, as it were, for an instant on the summit of the great range, the Pathfinder gave way to this apostrophe:

“O, mountain walls, ye are old, old friends of mine! From the western windows of my boyhood’s home I saw ye beckon me—beckon me with your thin, dark line of blue upraised against the sunset sky. Ye beckoned and beckoned until, one wonderful day, I followed the sun when it set behind you. . . . And now the ambitious Tomorrows of those days are the accomplished Yesterdays of To-day. . . . And now it is Afternoon. And I’m coming home.”

The “Lowry” was now swinging out into mid-river. Over to our left the Illinois shore still seemed rather expressionless, topographically. The only indication of its population and productiveness was the fairly numerous small-town

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landings. The buildings at these places were just visible through the groups and rows of trees. Scattered around behind the villages were little round knolls seemingly standing on tiptoe above the otherwise monotonous level;—perhaps they wanted to peep at their friend, the broad and shining river.

Far to the northward of those knolls stretched the fat cornfields of Illinois and Indiana. Horizon after horizon, they unrolled until stopped by the belt of smaller cities standing like outpost guards before that master-city of the Middle West—Chicago.

After a mile or two of mid-river our boat was set on a slanting course towards quite a large town that now appeared on the north bank. At the same time two long coal tows, a few rods apart, were coming down just above us. Their speed proved to be a wee bit faster than that on which our pilot had evidently calculated, for, seeing he could not get the “Lowry” safely across the bluff bows on the first one, he swerved his vessel very deftly and ran alongside until, “jingling” for an extra burst of speed, he shot through between the two. He was well over on a good course for his landing when the trailing swirls of the hindmost tow had passed the point of crossing. It was a clever, time-saving bit of piloting.

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We reached our landing to find that it was named "Golconda"! But, in spite of that, we found it quite a homelike and time-seasoned old river town.

We were told that we could go ashore for half an hour and look around, but to be sure to come right back on board when three warning blasts were blown on the "Lowry's" whistle. Delighted, we ran along the great gang-plank and jumped gaily off to the gravelly shore.

Interesting old brick shops with dormer windows, also tall warehouses, lined the top of the gently sloping bank, while a newer part of town lay about three blocks inland. Near the waterfront we found quite a "Fraunces' Tavern," still standing in the generous gardens that had come down with it from late colonial times. The resemblance to the famous tavern of the same name that still does duty as an inn near Wall Street, New York, while not striking, was enough to couple the two together in one's mind.

We thought the little town quite interesting, and the boat's whistle blew only too soon. Hurrying to the river we found that a drove of pigs were being "shooed" aboard the "Lowry."

Suddenly, on some mysterious porcine signal, they became unmanageable and scattered away up the bank and along the shore, grunting most ex-

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plosively. They were madly pursued by deckhands and roustabouts who, according to their individual failures or successes, swore, laughed or doggedly stumbled after their kink-tailed quarry. The captain, rushing ashore, recruited pig drovers from among the returning passengers. No one could refuse his rollicking request for help—we couldn't, anyway. Organized by the efficient skipper, we were sent with the rest on a wide, fan-shaped in-drive. The humour and novelty of the situation appealed to everybody, and they enjoyed the affair hugely. So behold the towering form of the Painter Man stooping double now and then to give more threat and *diablerie* to his wildy waving sketch book—see laughing ladies shooing with “tempestuous petticoat,” ably (?) seconded by portly old gentlemen brandishing some futile bit of stick picked up hastily at the “call to arms.” It was a medley of waving arms, handclapping and cries of “Soo-ey—sooey, pig.” In the midst of it, the mate came down to the boat with his arms full of packages, and he contributed quite a little to the general merriment by requiring the services of two or three people to pick up the things he continually dropped in his laughable attempts to wave his arms or wiggle his shoulders.

“Looks like you done got the passengers work-

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*ing* their passage, Cap'n," bawled out the mate, grinning.

"Yer, but they're all good sports," answered his superior officer, as the last pig was literally "mobbed" by four burly fellows throwing themselves all asprawl on top of it. Each seized a leg of the squealing brute and bore off the animal bodily.

Soon the "Lowry" was under way again, and, as we proceeded, the north bank increased in height. Some twenty miles above Golconda, the modest ridge became quite a bold cliff. In ages past it had, no doubt, been part of a rocky wall that stopped, dam-like, the flow of the racing stream and formed a waterfall. But the river had won—"water will wear away a stone"—and now this end of that ancient dam was left high and dry as a stream-worn limestone bluff, gashed at its base with a mighty cave. That cave has an infamous history, for it was once the stronghold of river pirates and cutthroats in the early part of the nineteenth century. Many a night-anchored "flatboat" or raft, bearing a party of pioneers down-river, had been boarded stealthily and the sleeping occupants robbed and murdered by these bandits of the bluff. Those old-time rafts and flats with their rounded roofs of reed-work, tent-cloth or tarpaulin were the "prairie schooners" of the river. Far West-

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bound emigrants, leaving homes in the upper valley of the Ohio—and far beyond—used the great waterway to reach the Missouri shore of the Mississippi.

The river now began to narrow, just a little, a mile or so above “Bandits’ Bluff.” “Cave-in-Rock” is the local name, but the Pathfinder’s love of naming places gave birth to “Bandits’ Bluff.” “Tennessee” island and “Cumberland” island were other instances of this particular wickness of his.

A low, broad flood-plain that ran out from the foot of a knob-like hill on the Kentucky shore, plainly caused the narrowing of the stream. Here the rocky bottom and swifter current further indicated that “Bandits’ Bluff” had been a gigantic anchor to the tremendous dam existing here aeons and aeons ago; “Kentucky Knob” on the opposite shore was the other anchor to that early dam. And now the site of all this prehistoric glory of the river was but a sulky watergap that snarled with its rocky shallows at the keels of passing craft. The rocks, though not above the surface, were indicated by sinister signs well known to water-men; mud bars lay between, but showed themselves more frankly.

The navigation of the rock-vexed waters of the next two or three miles proved the calm, unerring skill of those tense and ever-watchful men

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who pilot the steamboats on the Ohio. Backing away from a landing near these shallows, the boat was made to drift diagonally downstream for a hundred yards or so; then, with a burst of speed, the prow was pointed diagonally upstream about the same distance. Then we stopped again. Still another diagonal drift the same distance as before. This was getting interesting.

We looked up at the pilot-house. Through the open window we could see the pilot standing at his wheel as motionless as a statue, his eye fixed on some range-mark on the Kentucky side. Suddenly, he broke into a series of very rapid movements. The great wheel was sent spinning "hard over," only to be brought to a stop with a snappy jerk and held there by a sinewy, bare left arm. Next, his right arm, aided by a supple body, reached for the "jingle" wire and gave such quick snatches at it that the engine-room bell at the other end of it danced a merry jingle, of a truth! That last signal started the "Lowry" under full speed again and on another diagonal—heading upstream and out into the Kentucky channel. Without taking the fraction of time needed to straighten his body from the jingle pulling, his busy arm had jerked backward and upward, giving pulls at the whistle cord. The warning blasts were for a long, lumbering tow



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of empty coal barges being pushed "up the hill" to Pittsburg, its speed and course threatening to bring it right opposite our point of emergence into the regular channel. Then came another "jingle" in the engine-room and our boat shot out all clear and well ahead of the other craft. All of these complications of the situation had been swiftly and skilfully met—had been mastered with a rapidity that fairly took our breath!

As the "Lowry" set her nose sturdily against the current once more, a bushy-haired and Mark Twain-ish looking elderly man came along our deck; grinned up at the pilot and called out:

"You done noble, Bill!" Then, turning to us, he said:

"Young Bartlett is shore a Jim-dandy pilot—just as his daddy was afore 'im . . . that there wrigglin' through them sandbars an' rocks saved us two miles or more and kept us ahead of that pesky tow."

The pleasant old fellow then explained to us that the boat's course through the shallows had been very much in the form of a capital "W," the first drift being down the left side of the letter.

The Painter Man saw that the Pathfinder wanted to "draw out" the old man, so he tactfully came to the rescue by borrowing a match from the latter; this move was followed with a

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proffer of his tobacco pouch and an invitation to sit beside us, and join the big man in a smoke.

"Captured," murmured the Pathfinder, in an aside to his wife.

The Pathfinder had gauged his man correctly—he was a "find"; but even the Pathfinder did not realize, *then*, what a *big* find he had made. Time proved that. With naïve frankness and simplicity the old gentleman told us that he was "dead-heading" to Pittsburg.

"You see, my money is no good on the river boats," he chuckled, "'cause I'm a retired pilot."

Late in the afternoon we sighted a small tow ahead of us; when eventually overhauled, it was found to consist of a sturdy little push-boat shoving a couple of barges. A heavy cascade tumbled and splashed from the high, narrow stern wheel and the last rays of the October sunset caught that muddy water and transformed it into flashing gold!

Late as it was the Painter Man picked up the Pathfinder's "rainy day" camera and snapped what turned out to be a very clear and interesting photograph.

The river traffic visibly increased. After the next turn, we found a great tow "jockeying" around a reverse bend just above. The head barges were getting out of control and "yaw-

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ing" about rather dangerously, evidently with a sinister desire to fetch up against our bank, and not only cut us off from the landing that we were steering for, but also crush the "Lowry" into matchwood. So, to be safe, our boat "lay to" for nearly twenty minutes. During this interesting time the supper gong sounded and we went below.

The chief topic during the meal was "tows." The poor tows are the "awkward puppies" of the river. Forever are they blundering around the bends and getting under the feet of the swifter packets. Their pet blunder consists of sprawling half broadside-on to the channel when swinging around a point, and acting as if helplessly surprised, themselves, at the whole bally business! But the river-men are fairly good-tempered about it all and, while shouting efficient orders for cork fenders to soften the shock of impact, will grin across at each other, while the mix-up is on, as if the annoyance and danger were something of a joke, too.

When we returned to the deck after supper, one of those near-collisions was impending, and our thrill of expectancy was much enhanced by the tantalizing gloom of the late twilight in which the incident was taking place.

As old "Mark Twain" (the Pathfinder had already been at work with his little naming ma-

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chine) rushed by us to give any expert aid that he could, he sputtered out:

“It’s that pesky tow we cut ahead of this afternoon.”

So-o—it was the old story, again, of the “tortoise and the hare”—with the despised tow that we had outwitted miles back at the rocky shallows playing “tortoise. Our delay by the other tow and our long stop at the supper-time landing had lost us our lead. We were now trying to pass the tow again by slipping around under the lee of the push-boat and the barges next to it. We squeezed carefully into a narrow bit of open water, but a few moments later the brightly lighted mass of the other steamboat began to swerve in towards the “Lowry,” threatening to crush her against the bank. Strive as it might, to make room for us—like a thoughtful workman trying to keep his grimy overalls from touching a lady in a crowded street-car—the push-boat, struggling furiously against some enormous pressure from the unseen barges ahead, was swung like the tail of a kite towards our trembling boat. The great towboat came so near to us that, although we were scraping the bank to give him every possible inch of room, his madly turning stern wheel threw a small Niagara of water on our freight deck and nearly stampeded the cattle.

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The empty barges of the up-bound tows are fastened two and sometimes four abreast; being light, and drawing but little water, it is against their high sides that the rollicking winds love to launch a blow when half the line gets around a short bend. Then the powerful push-boats send up great columns of black smoke and jets of hissing steam in their frantic efforts to steady their wavering charges. But the truth is that the tows are remarkably well handled. The patience of the pilots and all concerned is simply the sane, well-poised attitude of capable men who recognize that there are some conditions too erratic to be entirely provided against, but which must be handled—and mastered—with the best judgment that the situation of the moment calls for. And the tows, awkward as they are at times, have a certain majesty of their own—an impressive dignity of both length and mass. The coal tows are the heavy chords in the life-music of the great river.

Just before bedtime, old "Mark Twain" came up to our deck to spin a yarn, while he enjoyed a "good-night" smoke. He told us that "Cave-in-Rock" was something of a picnic place at which excursionists were landed by the steamboats during the summer months. The cave being very cool made it popular as a sort of refrigerating point for heat-worn bodies. Steamers would leave the picnickers there in the early part of the

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day and call for them in the late afternoon. At night the searchlights are played on the bluff, when the passenger boats pass by.

We asked him how many landings there were between Paducah and Evansville.

"Somewheres about ninety, I reckon," he answered slowly after a few reflective puffs at his pipe. "Some o' them has got funny names, too. Now, there's that fool place called 'Pull Tight,' 'way back, down nigh to Padukey. And then there's 'Old Maid's Point,' 'Dog Island Landing,' 'Lover's Leap,' 'Slim Island' (an' *slim* is right, too), 'Starvation,' and a little old place ahead of us puts on dawg an' calls itself 'Noo York'!"

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"Great old song, that—you an' me"—addressing the Pathfinder; who was the senior member of the California party—"you an' me will remember of it being all the 'go,' eh?"

"Yes, and I want to sit up here until we get abreast of the old river and then I'm going to sing it—or sing *at* it—to myself. It has associations for me," replied the other.

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The empty barges of the up-bound tows are fastened two and sometimes four abreast; being light, and drawing but little water, it is against their high sides that the rollicking winds love to launch a blow when half the line gets around a short bend. Then the powerful push-boats send up great columns of black smoke and jets of hissing steam in their frantic efforts to steady their wavering charges. But the truth is that the tows are remarkably well handled. The patience of the pilots and all concerned is simply the sane, well-poised attitude of capable men who recognize that there are some conditions too erratic to be entirely provided against, but which must be handled—and mastered—with the best judgment that the situation of the moment calls for. And the tows, awkward as they are at times, have a certain majesty of their own—an impressive dignity of both length and mass. The coal tows are the heavy chords in the life-music of the great river.

Just before bedtime, old “Mark Twain” came up to our deck to spin a yarn, while he enjoyed a “good-night” smoke. He told us that “Cave-in-Rock” was something of a picnic place at which excursionists were landed by the steamboats during the summer months. The cave being very cool made it popular as a sort of refrigerating point for heat-worn bodies. Steamers would leave the picnickers there in the early part of the

## A CROOKED RIVER AND A CHANGE OF PLANS

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## ON THE OHIO

finder's head that the Colonel had given him a letter of introduction to one of the "Lowry's" pilots. On enquiry of "Mark Twain," it seemed that our man was now on watch.

The old man was all interest at once.

"I'll go up and tell him—you might as well let me show him your letter, too—and he can arrange to speak to you while we are tied up at the next landin'."

"You see," he explained on his return from his errand, "you see, they dassen't let any one into the pilot-house—leastways not when a boat's under way—'cause it's a Federal regulation—and a mighty tight one, too." He then told us to stand near the pilot-house door when the "Lowry" tied up at the landing that we were already slowing down for.

The moment his boat was secured to the wharf the pilot opened the door and stepped down to the deck on which we stood awaiting him.

"Glad to meet any friends of 'Pa Charley's,'" he said, cordially.

He was a studious-looking and rather shy man, in the early thirties; his handclasp betrayed the sinews of steel developed by gripping the steering wheel, but his Kentucky voice was as soft and pleasing as a girl's, despite its masculine depth of tone. He arranged for us to get up on the roof of the "texas" and peer through the

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pilot-house window and see him "play the 'drums and traps,' if you have good eyes for dim interiors."

"I'm going below to get the other pilot, he is one of Pa Charley's boys, too. . . . I'll be right back."

We were quite "thrilled" (as Mrs. Pathfinder expressed it) at the prospect of our promised entertainment, and clambered up to the "texas" as eagerly as youngsters crowding into the elephant tent of Barnum's circus.

We had just gotten nicely settled when the pilot returned, accompanied by his friend. As they closed the door, the light was switched off, for a pilot-house must be in darkness when a steamer is on her course or on the point of leaving a landing.

One of the young men came to the window below which we sat, and, opening it, said:

"I've brought Mr. Bartlett—the pilot who slipped us through the shallows this afternoon."

A shadowy form bowed to us. Pilot Bartlett, it seemed, was to stand by the window and whisper explanations while the other man got the boat away and on her course. A high stool was passed out for the lady to stand on, but she was suddenly startled into nearly falling from it when a swift pull at the whistle cord sent out a hoarse bellow close overhead. Next came the sounds of

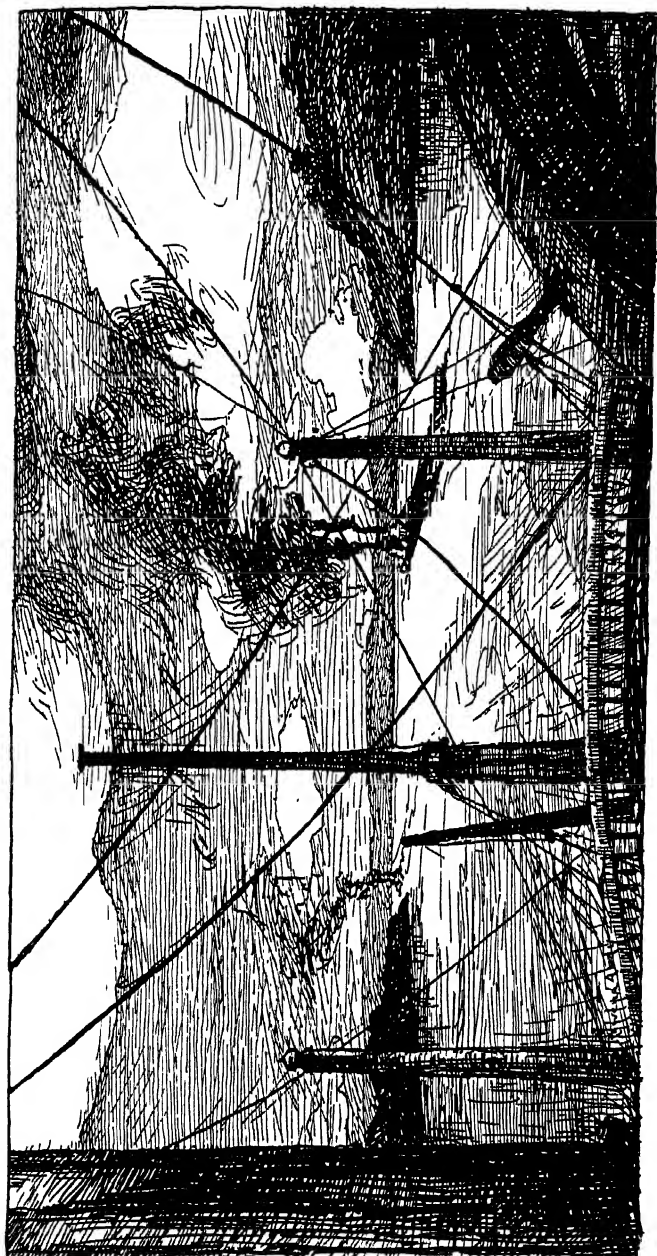
## ON THE OHIO

“yanked” wires, clanged bells and the curious creaky-crackly sound of the spinning and turning steering wheel. “Click” went an electric button after the first tumult of sound had passed, and a bar-like beam of light shot out on the waters ahead. We were under way. Through some mischance, the deck lights were not switched off. “Douse the deck lights,” the pilot called down a tube hanging conveniently near his mouth, and the offending lights went out instantly.

Inside the pilot-house was now a silence quite uncanny. We but vaguely saw a sort of Dim Presence at the wheel, moving its arms occasionally as the steering needed attention. The Presence never spoke. Despite a weird little shaded spotlight over a dial, and the reflected starlight from the river’s surface that filtered feebly through the long front window, the interior, to us, was a dark and tantalizing mystery. Dimly could we see a perfectly bewildering array of levers, wheels, ropes, chains, electric buttons and speaking tubes that only a pilot (or a pianist) would ever try to play on.

“Sorry we can’t have you inside, where it’s so nice and warm,” remarked he at the window, addressing the lady, having noted her close scrutiny of the cosy little room with its cheery stove and comfortable settees.

“Oh, never mind, thank you—I prefer to be



THE PILOT'S VIEW



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‘outside looking in’ on this occasion. . . . I only wished to see if you had comfortable quarters—and, you have.”

Some of us mentioned “Mark Twain” and wondered if he had ever served as a pilot on the Ohio. Then the Dim Presence, without turning from its steadfast watchfulness ahead, said, with sudden, vibrant interest:

“You bet he *did*—right on this very part of the river. My old ‘dad’ and he had this ‘run’ together, same as me and Jack there have it now. . . . ‘Sammy Clements’—as Paw used to speak of him—was only a ‘cub’ pilot then.” . . . (He ceased speaking while he sent the wheel “hard over” and gave the whistle a warning blast as the “Lowry” rounded a bend.) . . . “The old boat they steered,” he resumed, as the whistle’s echoes died away, “is said to be part of a wharf somewhere down river.”

We waited for more, but none came. The Dim Presence was watching a cluster of lights ahead. His brother pilot whispered:

“Frank’s going to make a rather difficult landing now—one of the worst on the river—for there the current is strong and nasty wind squalls rush down a gully. Sometimes it gets us a-scrabblin’ to keep from knocking over the wharf. Once, when I had a boat all nicely tied up there and was mopping my ‘fevered brow,’ a plague-ed old

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tow's hind end swung plumb up against us and started my boat downstream with the little old landing warehouse a-followin' us!"

Once more the pilot was doing swift and numerous things with his wheels and levers, gongs and wires. Verily, was he soul and brain for that great fabric of senseless wood and steel! He made a perfect landing—smooth and jar-less. So soon as he received the signal "All fast below!" he switched on the light and joined the group at the window. We urged him to sit and rest; whereupon his brother pilot, with easy thoughtfulness, hooked the toe of his boot into the rings of a chair and dragged it over to him.

"You have quite a library, I see," remarked the Painter Lady, presently, for she was the "bookworm" of our party. Books proved to be a mutually interesting subject. We found the pilots were well-read and thoughtful men. This started a line of speculative thought that led us to wonder how much the aloofness and the stillness of the pilot-house had contributed to the making of "Mark Twain." Perhaps, the quiet leisure at landing stops had given him his first trend towards things literary. Who knows?

When we went below after watching the "Lowry" put on her course again, we found the crowd of passengers much reduced. Only a few were going to Evansville, apparently.

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Seeing so much more room in the salon, we sat down for a chat, in which Daddy Twain soon joined us. We remarked on the reduction of our numbers. The old gentleman explained that the last landing stopped at was a sort of divisional point. Passengers who might come aboard from now on would be bound through to Evansville. Points that are a night's run from the city always supply a lot of week-end "trippers" who go up Saturday nights and return in time for work and business Monday mornings. "Many of them prepay their return passage," he said, laughing, because they were thus sure of "a roof, a meal's vittles and a ride home" in case they "went broke" in Evansville. The "Lowry," it seemed, also made special excursions at times and gave a "movie" show in the salon as an added attraction. On all the main rivers, too, the packets are crowded with excursionists, picnickers and "fresh air trippers" from May to September.

"If you folks had come a month earlier, you could have travelled on the new excursion boats; they have fine accommodations—like shore hotels," Daddy Twain observed after a few moments of silence.

Yes, we could, but while we would have appreciated the greater comfort of them, we doubt if we could have gotten so close to the real heart



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of the old river life as we did on the steady, time-worn "carry-alls," as one might term them.

"We'll soon be passin' the mouth of the Wabash," remarked the old pilot, just before ten o'clock.

The gentlemen rose to go on deck.

"No, thanks," said the Painter Lady on being invited to join them, "it's too chilly; besides," she added mischievously, "it looks as if this watch for the Wabash is going to be a sort of combination of 'stag' party and Irish 'wake.'"

"Business" of the gentlemen "registering" (1) Towering Indignation (by the towering Painter Man); (2) Blood-curdling Threats (by the friendly-mannered Pathfinder); (3) Injured Innocence—part number three being taken by Daddy Twain with a "finish" resulting from long experience, evidently, for from his capacious hip pocket there protruded the corked neck of the most damning evidence of "wake"-ful preparedness!

On deck, the three found a night of pitch-black darkness. Two little beacon lights on the Indiana bank came slowly down abeam; they were but a few rods apart and the space between seemed to have collected the very deepest darkness of the night.

"There's your Wabash, gents," said Daddy Twain, pointing between the beacons.

## A CROOKED RIVER AND A CHANGE OF PLANS

And so that funny trio, sitting there on the throbbing stern, took the measured rhythm of the thrashing wheel for their "time," and sang, in such melody as they might, "On the Banks of the Wabash Far Away." Ah, what would the author of the song have given the night he composed it, could he have been so near his beloved river; for that touching old song was wrung from the homesick heart of poor Paul Dresser while exiled in un-Wabashlike New York.

When the throats of the amateur singers were tired, two of them filled their pipes for a "good-night" smoke and asked the Pathfinder why the song had associations for him, since he was not a "Hoosier."

"Oh, it was only a pleasant and, I suppose I might say, a somewhat historical incident," said the other. "The scene goes back to Tampa, Florida, during the Spanish-American War. Our 'army of occupation' destined for Cuba was embarking, at last, after many delays, for Santiago. A group of war correspondents, among them Richard Harding Davis and Stephen Crane, were under the great rotunda-lobby of the Tampa Bay Hotel. They were in high spirits, as the prospects for action were good. The laughing, lively group was soon joined by several Floridian journalists, myself, the youngest editor in Florida, among them. After a jolly good time together

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we all joined in and sang the then popular song 'On the Banks of the Wabash.' Over there," pointing to the Indiana bank, "is the Wabash. . . . I have now 'traced it to its lair'—that's all."

The lazy dawn of the October day still cast its chill along the decks, when the Pathfinder, eager for his first view of Evansville, peeped sleepily through the Venetian blinds of the state-room window.

"See anything?" asked the blanket-muffled voice of Mrs. Pathfinder from the lower berth.

"Only a farm."

"Then go back to bed and behave yourself; we are not due at Evansville until breakfast time, and you know it."

Stricken chill and dumb by both the dawn and the wifely admonishment, the Pathfinder receded into his blankets. After half an hour or so of "beauty sleep," he became conscious of a boy's high treble calling at the door of the adjoining stateroom.

"Gee, Aunt Mary, you'd better hurry up an' dress—Evansville's in sight from the other side of the boat!"

Bolt upright sat the Pathfinder. Then "the other side of the boat" part of the boy's statement reached into his mind with meaning and he sank back to his pillow again, musing: "What a very excited little boy . . . his first visit to the city, no

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doubt . . . sees a village and thinks its Evansville. Poor little chap, the city will be on *this* side of the boat."

Then he turned over and murmured a prayer that when the little boy grew up and became a wise old traveller—like—well, like Pathfinders, for instance—*he* would not be needlessly awakened by excited little boys with shrill, treble voices calling their Aunt Marys.

Soothed by his soul's satisfaction at this bit of tolerant piety (?), he dropped asleep again. But only for the space of "forty winks"; then he was again rudely awakened, this time by the deep bass of the Painter Man saying:

"Oh, say, Billabdy—you two ought to be on deck;—look out of your window and see the spires and towers against the morning sky."

"Br-r-rattle," up went the window slats.

"Sure enough,—I knew the little boy was wrong. The city *is* on this side! Come and see," and Mr. and Mrs. Pathfinder thereupon played "peep-show" between the Venetian slat-screens.

"Oh, what a fairy forest of stacks and steeples! That smoky haze and morning mist makes the city's skyline a wonderful subject for a charcoal sketch."

The while the Pathfinders hurriedly dressed they went many times to peep through the lattice. In fact, Mr. Pathfinder went to the window so

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often between his socks and collar button that he had to be reminded that he would be the last to be dressed. But curiosity overcame even the fair admonisher, for she made one or two trips to the window herself. On the last one of these she exclaimed:

“Why—why,—it’s gone—the city has gone!”

The Pathfinder, now struggling with the traditional collar button, gave a start—hesitated—then a “light” broke in upon his understanding. With a tease in his voice and a wise twinkle in his eye, he queried:

“What did you do with the city—you had it last?”

Going out, he looked back and added:

“I’m going to apologize to the little boy—he seems to be right, after all—and then, incidentally, I’ll make ’em put the city back so you can see it again while you are dressing.”

He returned ten minutes later.

“Well, I made ’em put it back”—swelling his chest—“look out of the window.”

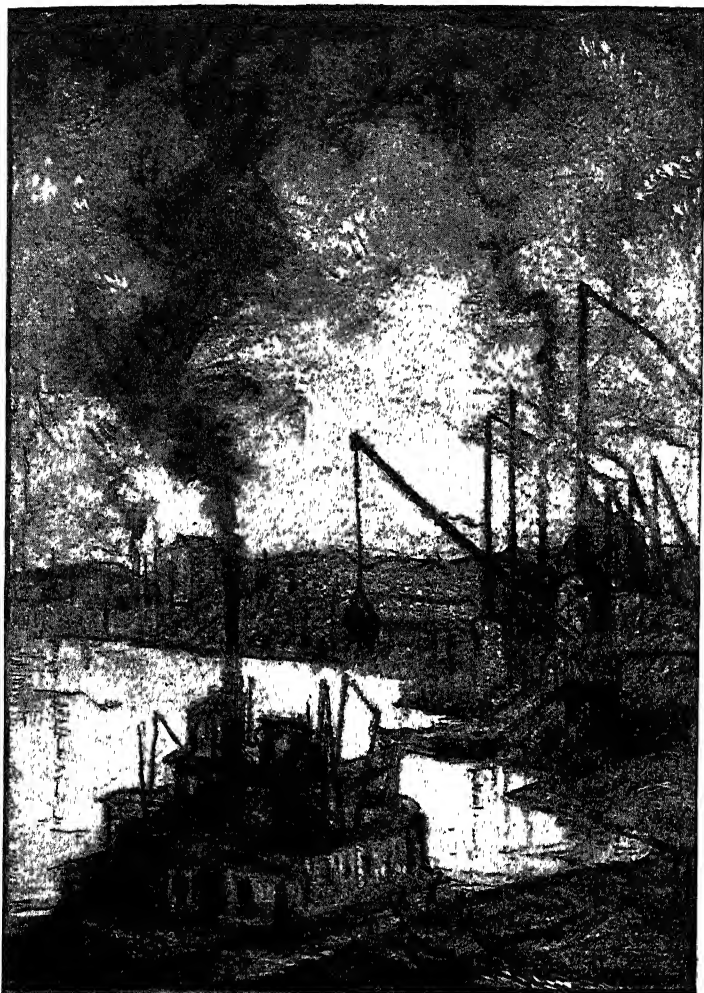
She did,—and there was the city again!

Thereupon, she flashed round on him with a knowing smile:

“There’s something crooked here!”

“There is,—it’s the river,” he laughed.

And so it was. So flattened are the long “S” curves just south of Evansville that it keeps the



SAND DERRICKS . . . A CURVING RIVER . . . A  
TWILIGHT SKY, EVANSVILLE, IND.



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passengers running from one side of the boat to the other, if they wish to keep the city in sight!

Breakfast was now served, but we only hurriedly swallowed a cup of coffee, promising ourselves a nice leisurely meal at some good hotel, later.

We returned to the deck and glanced up at the tense-figured pilot.

"Oh, I should think the poor pilots would get dizzy steering in *such* a channel!" exclaimed the little Painter Lady, as we received a wan smile and a "good-morning" look from the tired eyes of the steadfast man at the wheel.

That Evansville was much larger than Paducah one could readily see by the busier river and the more crowded levee. But we came to know, later, that the towns and villages of the lower river are rather more picturesque, and decidedly richer in that quaint Southern flavour that affects the life along most of the Ohio.

Evansville's levee has much charm and interest for the artist. There is a long, graceful boulder-paved slope, the whole set with a sort of sweeping flourish on an easy-curving bend of the bank.

Leaving his companions to keep track of the trunks and to engage a transfer man, the Pathfinder hurried ashore to look for a good hotel. A flight of stone steps lends dignity to the levee of this fine old river port and also provides an easy



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means of ascending the steep bank. At the top is a low wall, and the Pathfinder, having reached this, literally "dropped into town"—and out of sight—behind it. An hour later the three friends sat down to a late breakfast that was excellently served and leisurely eaten. They were in high good humour, for they were freshly bathed, some were freshly shaved and all were freshly dressed.

The Vendome was an excellent house, and though quite a large hotel and swamped with a big convention, it was wonderful how it found time and talent to make us river wanderers feel comfortably "at home."

During breakfast the Painter Man told us how he had gone into the men's wash-room on the boat that morning when he found there was no water in his stateroom. Three or four men, with characteristic American good humour, were either laughing or whimsically swearing at the conditions found in that place of ablutions. Our friend saw red-brown streaks and smears on the roller towels and said to himself in shocked decency: "The slovenly washers!" Just then a man opened the faucet over his washbowl, and lo, a muddy stream gushed forth, all too willingly, it would seem. The Californian watched with a fascinated interest (not unmingled with admiration for this man's courage), as the washer splashed what had been a clean-skinned face and made himself a ruddy-

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streaked Indian! It was that awful river water, pumped direct to the washbowls! When a trusting victim wiped his face, the towel recorded the indignity that had been offered—or, rather applied! When the drain plugs were pulled the water would leave behind it a thick reddish sediment. “Not for me,” declared the Painter Man, and went forth and braved the world,—unwashed!

After lunch we went to the levee front. It was a frequent source of wonderment to us to see the various official “high water” inscriptions painted on the stones of the levee wall or on the walls of houses that seemed far removed, by their elevation above the river, from any danger of flood. Perhaps it is the frequency of very high water that has developed the peculiar architecture seen in the tall and slender brick buildings on the levee tops all along the Ohio. The inmates, goods, chattels and provisions can be moved to higher floors during a water-siege, and the solid, well-braced line of buildings are also better able to withstand the impact of the rushing flood.

Usually our arrival on a levee with our painting outfit was the most novel “excitement” of the day. This day on the Evansville levee we had to play “second fiddle” and share the honours with a couple of aviators who had just descended from the sky and dropped skimmingly to the surface of the river in a wide-winged hydroplane! We were

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all so sorry that we had just missed seeing them "land."

An excited group of levee loafers had just pulled the machine ashore with a rope thrown to them by one of the aviators. We rushed down and were quite willing to be of the entertained instead of the entertainers. It transpired that they were flying to Florida for the winter and had made their start somewhere up Wisconsin way.

Somehow, the paint box and sketch book were not opened.

The artists said: "Oh, we are too excited by our new surroundings—we can't work,—let us loaf."

So, very sensibly, they did so. The Pathfinder pretended to be shocked at such temperamental laziness and hurled at them his pet phrase, "levee loafers." Whenever he found one or both of the artists sitting anywhere about the levee with idle brush or crayon, he affected not to know that the clever brain was working even though the brushes rested. To-day he joined his "loafers" as they strolled along the levee, studying it in order to get the local "atmosphere."

Once or twice the Painter Man opened his sketch book, saying:

"*There's* some stunning stuff," and just so often he would resolutely bang it shut with a:

"No, sir-r,—I'll wait till tomorrow!"

## A CROOKED RIVER AND A CHANGE OF PLANS

By agreement we waited near the Louisville packet's wharf in the late afternoon in order to say "good-bye" to good old Daddy Twain, who was going on through.

"Sorry we can't go on with you," we said, sincerely.

"Oh, I may take a notion to lay over some place—keep a lookout for me. So long, an' 'God bless ye,'" and the kindly soul was gone.

There was much more river traffic centring on Evansville than on any place we had seen since leaving St. Louis. Many launches, large and small, were busily engaged on short-haul trips to river towns and villages above and below the city. Many of these "river jitneys," as we heard them called, ran on the smaller tributaries of the Evansville region. The great Standard Old Company serves its customers of this river world, not with the familiar ponderous tanks on wheels, but with river "tankers," tiny counterparts of their ocean-going brothers.

When the artists finally sat down and began to make little "thumbnail" sketches of things and persons about them, the Pathfinder set off on a "browsing" stroll among the funny old shops and ship-chandleries of the riverfront. The various steamboat lines had their offices here, and steamboat men stood and sat and lounged all about.

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The chief topic of conversation seemed to be about a "two-foot rise" of the river that was expected to reach the town that evening. There is a strict watch kept on the river-flow, and each town is in close touch with its neighbour up or down the stream, the official observers being on watch both day and night. The "two-foot rise" was a very useful one, it was said, and hardly to be expected at that time of the year. It would improve navigation in the upper river where sometimes all heavy boats stopped for lack of deep-enough water, the enforced idleness lasting until the very late autumn or early winter rains began. Fog, also, was expected to follow the "rise."

In fact, the Pathfinder was rather dismayed at the prospect of his party's river progress being halted, or even stopped, by two possible obstacles of which he only learned on "arrival at the front." Those hindrances in the late autumn were fog and low water. However, there was nothing to be done but wait and see.

The steamboat agencies were quite "alive," and distributed modest little pamphlets setting forth the attractions of their several routes, giving complete details as to distances and names of landings. It was of much interest to us to learn that we could board a smart little packet at Evansville and make a two-hundred-mile voyage

## A CROOKED RIVER AND A CHANGE OF PLANS

up the Green River, a tributary stream coming in from the southern side (as usual!), about nine miles up the Ohio. And every mile we made up that river of pellucid green would take us farther into the heart of old Kentucky. Then, at the end of our voyage—right in front of the last landing—there would be the Mammoth Cave !

Surely this Hoosier river port is a good centre from which the tourist and historian could reach either the pioneer settlements on the Green, in Kentucky, or those on the Wabash, in Indiana. Old Vincennes and Terre Haute are on the banks of the Wabash and can be readily reached by fast and frequent trains, Vincennes being but forty, and Terre Haute one hundred miles, north.

Next morning the artists sketched on their beloved waterfront, and the Pathfinder started on a "voyage of discovery" around the town. Where the levee stopped at the upper end, a pretty park peered over the edge of a high bank, much in the manner that a bright and pretty woman, in a picnic dress, might look on at a group of busy workmen in overalls and brogans. The park was a pleasant contrast to the freight-covered levee, benches having been placed at the bank's edge so that the shipping could be seen. Surely, in the sweltering days of summer, the perspiring labourers on the wharves must enjoy

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many a cooling breeze from its broad, open spaces. Evansville has certainly been both wise and kind to put that park there. It must have been a yearly fight of field and flood that moved the city to champion the former, for the floods have been balked of their attempt to cut a straight channel at the base of the wide bend. Traces of the great gash it started are still there, but the scar is healed and smoothed by grass and the gardener's art. Music pavilions, tennis courts and stadiums, instead of a rolling, swirling, red-brown flood,—that is the victory won at Evansville.

In the afternoon the artists decided to explore the town and paint when early evening came. Thus, we started another little practice, for we found that the autumn afternoons were not so paintable as the mornings and early evenings. So it came about that we did our exploring and sight-seeing after luncheon. Suburban trolley lines gave us the impressions of a city as a whole, and strolls along the streets, both the main and side ones, revealed much of its business spirit and activities.

But it was the old homes of the past generation that interested us the most. They were quaint and attractive in their style of a day gone by;—pathetic, too, and ill-at-ease; some because they were shut in by encroaching factories; others because they were stared or scoffed at by more

## A CROOKED RIVER AND A CHANGE OF PLANS

modern houses, which looked down sneeringly from their heights of a story or two more.

The old market-place, of both open and covered spaces, seemed to be the centre around which clustered a few old taverns, liveries and shops. These also could be traced (in scattered ones and twos) down a street that led to the east of the levee, where it snuggled under the bank. This was, apparently, the site of the earlier town, when its chief industry was sawing up the black walnut logs that were rafted thither on the rivers from the forests of Kentucky.

Well inland from the levee front, the town was much newer and growing fast. In ante-bellum days this part of the city must surely have been the site of several homesteads, for we found there, amidst modern villas, a fine old farmhouse.

The student of such struggles could plainly see that stubborn resistance had been offered by the old home. It had fought a losing fight against the yearly increasing pressure of the skimpy city lots;—lots that relentlessly robbed it of its ancient heritage of broad acres and treeful lanes. It was now reduced to the "last ditch"—to its last half-acre, and to the last of its "old guard" of scraggy, soot-smothered trees. Even two of these—gnarled old sycamores they were—had been separated, by a new front fence, from their



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four fellow-guards on the box-bordered lawn, and were left standing in a sort of awkward grace on the outer edge of a modern sidewalk. And that stiff, straight line of modern fence!—it was as uncompromising as the cold, stern edict of the city surveyor who had ordered it there for the sake of street alignment. It was grievous, too, for a lover of fine old trees to see the pick-and-shovel-scarred roots of the sycamores, creeping back in their wounded agony, under the obstructing fence and into the sweet, healing soil from which they sprang.

Late that afternoon, the artists, standing midway of the levee, saw that Evansville's sky line at the western end was rather imposing. The twin towers of a distant church stood high and strong above the scene, while to the left a group of factory chimneys, more modest in their aims against the sky, set free, from their sooty pipes, long, graceful streamers of dense black smoke. Down below, at the water's edge, sprang up a tall and slender sand derrick, steel-girdered and lace-like. Clustered about the foot of it were sheds wherein was stored the sand,—the whole effect being that of a sturdy, root-like base for the slender crane, and a finish for the picture. From the ship-chandlers' shops, there came drifting on the evening air strong, pungent odours of tarred rope, tallowed boots and coats of tarpaulin.

## A CROOKED RIVER AND A CHANGE OF PLANS

How the author of "Old Seaport Towns of the South" would have revelled in such sniff-ings! Her interest in such seafaring surroundings was betrayed in amusing paragraphs about her explorations among the ship-chandlers' shops on Light Street, Baltimore. Oddly enough, it was among those very shops that the author of *this* book, when a youth, browsed vagrantly and sniffed ecstatically, the while his romantic imagination sailed him over the seven seas!

Next day we were to sail for Louisville on the steamer "Tarascon." The sailing hour was ten in the morning; "subject," the schedule read, "to change without notice and delays incident to navigation." Wise proviso! At the sailing hour next morning, the levee and all the river for a hundred miles in either direction was stilled and silent—the busy, pulsing river-world of the day before was now a fog-enshrouded realm of mystery! The thick, yes, almost *unbreathable* pall had settled over the water about dawn. Our boat had not yet reached her wharf on the down trip, and no one except those on board of her knew just where she was—and there was a chance that even *they* did not!

We returned to our hotel, re-engaged our rooms and cancelled the trunk-moving order. At first we were inclined to bemoan our fate and blame much of it, indirectly, on the missing of

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the Kansas City connection many weeks back. The delayed "Ohio" also came in for some sarcastic comments. The latter, by this time, late though she was, would have carried us beyond the fog blockade. However, by comparing notes, we soon came to the soothing conclusion that we had *gained*, immeasurably, by our *loss*. Even this fog delay was "part and parcel" of the great river whose every mood we had come so far from home to study.

When we found, by the following evening, that the fog still strangled the Ohio, we decided to call a conference to discuss the situation and perhaps evolve new plans. The meeting was "called to order" in the quietest corner of a cosy "chop-house" discovered by the Pathfinder. It stood about midway of the old thoroughfare that ran from the waterfront to the market-place. The Pathfinder, in searching for this quiet type of grill, found it after an hour's exploration—and it was only five minutes walk from our hotel! It was the very place for ladies and gentlemen who had travelled in other lands and enjoyed many varieties of food.

Here one could procure a properly broiled chop or steak with a "mug" of British ale or porter, or a savoury bit of poultry served "en casserole" with a bottle of California sauterne. Such places are hard to find away from our seaboard cities;

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prolonged search or the services of a friend "who knows" are needed to disclose their hiding-places in cosy corners on quiet side streets. Here, then, at our "chop-house," seated about a big, round table in a softly lighted corner, we forgot the dripping fog outside in our enjoyment of an excellent dinner. With the serving of the dessert, the Pathfinder also "served" a large packet of "snap-shots." The Smithland pictures had come by mail, and he had even gotten the last of the Evansville prints rushed through in time for this occasion.

That dinner, that chop-house, and that conference stand out as a very pleasant "landmark" in our memories. Our talk had shown us to be on the horns of a dilemma. Our next port was Louisville and we had to decide whether to do as we had done at Kansas City—"cut across lots" by rail—or wait until the "Tarascon" could take us there. It smote us to the heart to miss over one hundred miles of river, but the chances for going that way were remote and indefinite. On the other hand, the date was *very* definite when we must be in New York, for the two artists had arranged to hold exhibitions, there, of their California canvases.

We decided to "cut across lots" again. So the next morning found us, with disappointed faces, rather listlessly watching the unexciting

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landscape of southern Indiana roll past our car windows.

As our railway route took us farther and farther away from the region of the river—more and more inland—we slowly became aware that the Southern influence, which even affected life on the north bank of the great stream, was being left behind. We became conscious of a sense of drabness in the landscape, in the villages and in the people. That railway journey, grudgingly undertaken because our friend the river was in an unmanageable mood, had given us an undisturbed opportunity for digestive thought about what we had, so far, seen or sensed since leaving old St. Louis.

Along towards the latter part of *this* journey, the Pathfinder, after nearly an hour of silence, broke out with:

“Do you know, I have never quite gotten over my surprise at the markedly Southern atmosphere of that old hotel in Cairo!”

Out of the discussion that followed, we came to realize that we had found this Southern flavour ever recurrent. From that afternoon on, we were always looking for and studying the Southern influence exerted in the communities on the north bank of the historic stream.

While we talked, now with all boredom gone, our train had turned towards the river again.

## A CROOKED RIVER AND A CHANGE OF PLANS

The tiresome flatness of the landscape gave way to gentle knolls and tiny valleys. We passed a village nestled in a ring of rolling hills, and, as we did so, the Painter Man made a quick gesture at one of the houses and exclaimed:

“Say, *there’s* something paintable at last! Look at that old brick house—those old-fashioned gardens—that balcony.”

The Pathfinder looked at his watch:

“No wonder you are ‘seeing things’ again; we are once more entering the northernmost fringe of the South,—this place is only ten miles north of the Ohio.”

All the way up that busy river, for over three hundred leagues, we were to find that the South had really crossed to the North in the palmy days before the Civil War. Strangely enough, too, the South stopped its “invasion” just about where Mason and Dixon’s line, if carried west a few miles farther, would have appeared with its most westerly boundary post on the south bank of the river. And, *eastward* along that famous line, the Southern influence appears less and less until, the State of Pennsylvania coming to the border on the north, the aforesaid influence is almost negligible. This furnishes yet another proof of the peculiar part the Ohio plays in the matter. Truly, it would seem that the Ohio and the Mason-Dixon line were, and are, the boundary

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lines between Cavalier and Puritan—more or less accidentally so—but, none the less, a boundary. So, too, our little company came to know that while “north of the Ohio” was as illuminative a term as “north of Mason and Dixon’s line,” they also found proof that the “North” does not begin as a clearly distinctive “North” until the distance of a day’s march back from the river. In the regions to the rear of the older towns of the north bank this is especially noticeable.

The more mature civilization and the more genial culture of the Cavaliers from the Old Dominion (Virginia) did, most positively, keep their power to influence, not only their own Kentucky and Tennessee, but they even distinctly tinged the more rough-and-ready settlements founded by the energetic and practical Puritans on the north shore of the boundary-marking stream.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Louisville*

Louisville and a Prophetic Novel—An Ancient Village—A Gretna Green—Splendid Parks and an Inland Coast-guard Station—Tomb of a President.

IF, in starting this new chapter, the reader will let us reach back into the past some thirty years or so, to pick up a thread, that same thread, though only in a small measure germane to this narrative, may prove to be sufficiently interesting and pertinent to repay the indulgence. San Franciscans and Ohio Valley people will be chiefly interested; and anyway, the Painter Man will be.

One night on the Mississippi, as we neared Cairo, the writer vainly tried to give him a connected synopsis of an H. G. Wells-like prophetic novel, published many years ago, forecasting the submergence and destruction of many cities along the Ohio. But the novel had been hurriedly read (during some rather anxious days over a quarter of a century ago), and the memory of it had been buried under the succeeding incidents of a busy and active life lived all over the continent of North America from Winnipeg to Mexico.



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The book, entitled "A. D. 2000," was written by a young army engineer stationed at the Presidio, in San Francisco. He puts his hero into a long, long, deep sleep (see the Wellsian influence?) in the base of a colossal monument. That monument still graces the peak of one of San Francisco's many shapely summits and the motor-tourist of to-day, as he swings around a shoulder of Twin Peaks on the scenic boulevard, always asks for information about the statue on the peak below.

When the Sleeper wakes, he is supposed to find that wondrous changes have come; but, curiously enough, he does not foresee the automobile. The changes he *does* mention that interest us and our readers, as we start this chapter, is that the central Ohio Valley has tremendously subsided and Louisville is at the bottom of a sea! This gigantic cave-in had been caused by continent-wide explosions of natural gas far below the surface of the region, and the water of the upper Ohio had filled in the enormous depression. Cairo, at the mouth of the Ohio, came in for some weird experiences, too.

It was the futile effort to recall this part of the story that had troubled the Pathfinder on the night we were nearing Cairo, and which "teased" him all the way up the Ohio until, in one quick, bewildering flash (don't miss this, students of the

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subconscious mind!), it all came back, in a choking, incoherent flood, as our train passed over the long, high bridge which carried us to Louisville! Far beneath, we could see that the Falls of the Ohio and the dam built just above had transformed the river into a vast lake, and far across it rose the spires and towers of Louisville . . . Louisville . . . a sea. Ah!—that was it—that was the lost key to the Corridors of Memory! And so it all came back . . . the initial explosion that was supposed to result from the flowing into an open natural gas well, in the corner of a Pittsburg foundry, of many tons of runaway molten metal. . . . The hero descending in a submarine (the illustration of it is a gem!) to view the submerged houses and churches of Louisville, as they stood, all weirdly and wondrously intact, at the bottom of the “Louisville Sea.”

Yes, Louisville and the “sea” were there—Louisville, right side up and without a care! And Kentucky’s big, chief city, stretching her eyes with proud satisfaction over that magnificent sheet of water, could be very readily forgiven if she ever desires to give to it the name of “Lake Louisville.” We learned, later, that the dammed-up river supplied not only water for a canal to float steamers around the falls, but also provided slack-water navigation for fifty miles upstream.

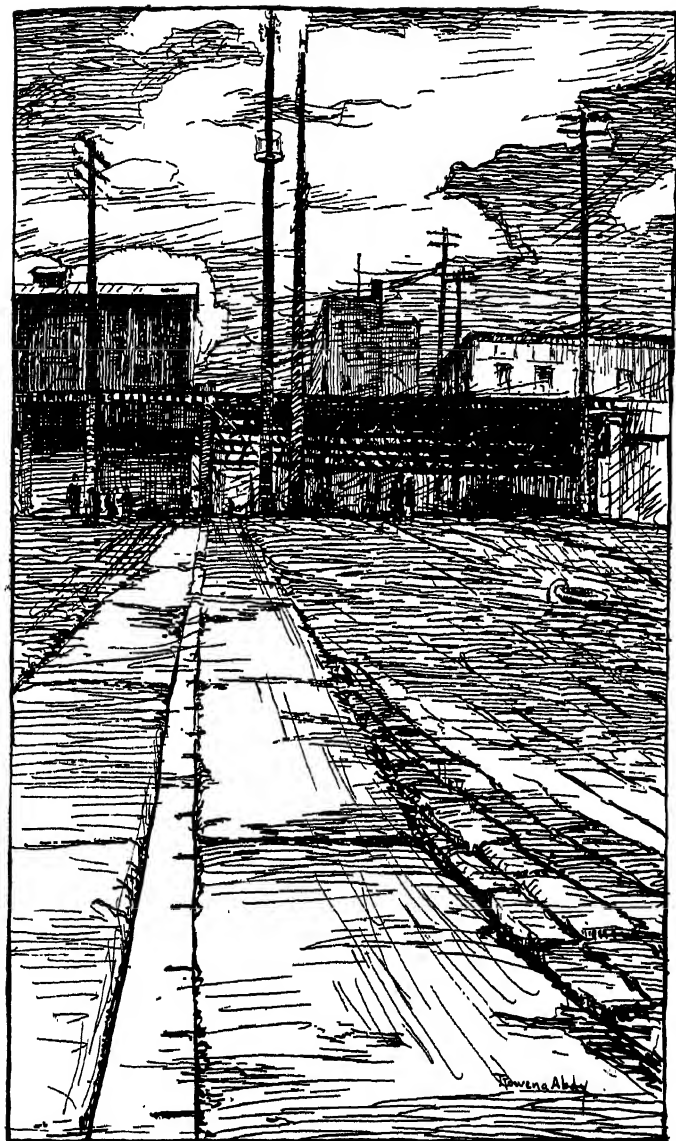
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On our arrival at the river towns we always looked for a good hotel that was nearest the levee. In this we were especially lucky in Louisville. So, even before we unpacked our trunks, we hurried out, and went down the three or four short blocks that stretched between the hotel and the waterfront.

Somehow, the levee at Louisville seemed to mildly disappoint us. From what we were told in Evansville we expected to find,—well, something that we had found so far at all the levees—paintableness. Here there was very much more business being carried on, but it only provided us with two sketches and six photographs. However, we found much of other interest.

It was at Louisville that we actually saw in the flesh, so to speak, the poor old steamer "Ohio"—at last! She had become in our minds a myth,—a something that we had spoken very much about but never expected to see. Well, there she was, southbound to Memphis again and "loaded to the guards" with Kentucky whiskey. Whiskey! And it was being taken to a "dry" town like Memphis! Not only were the "Ohio's" decks piled high with the liquor cases, but she had just been given an old barge as a sort of tender, and on the latter was being stacked, into a very pyramid, the remainder of the big consignment.

The old boat was to sail the evening of our



THE GREAT DEVEE GAUGE, LOUISVILLE



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arrival, so we went down, after dinner, to see her start. She looked so awkward and so funny as she pushed, with her nose, that unwieldy whiskey-laden scow! However, in spite of all that (and more, eh?), we were friendly and waved to the old girl a cheery "bon voyage."

At the Louisville levee is to be found the only *inland* life-saving station of the U. S. Coast Guard Service. It is housed in a large wharfboat sort of building on which is placed a tiny lookout tower. Up in the latter a watch is maintained, as on board a ship, a watch both night and day. Some of the crew were old man-o'-war's men.

The captain told us of many rescues they had made. Not only small boats and their occupants, but also disabled steamers, had been rescued while drifting toward death and destruction over the falls. The men prize very much, too, a medal and also a framed testimonial presented to them by the city of Dayton for their bravery and devotion during the famous flood. The lifeboat had to be shipped by rail, but it and its Louisville crew got there in "rush order" and the men saved both life and property.

On the Louisville waterfront there was but one relic left of the early days. Great factories, warehouses and railway lines had not swept away the curious features of an old thoroughfare that led from the river's edge into town. It should

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be named Step Street. If not that, then it could be just as appropriately called "Levee Gauge Lane," for we found it by following up from the water's edge the official river gauge. The latter is a narrow band of flagstones set in the slope of the levee, and runs up to the foot of what was once the old bank. Every twelve inches a numbered "foot" is marked on the stones in white paint.

From the upper end of the gauge one can see the curiously terraced sidewalks of dingy old "Step" Street climbing up to the main city level in a series of step-like ascents. A rise of two, three and sometimes six steps (and these are the full width of the generous sidewalks, too) raises the pedestrian up to the next steeply slanting terrace. Sometimes a terrace will give way, in mid-block, when a modern alley cuts in deeply at right angles, and one must run down a stone stairway to the alley's level and then reascend the other side by more stone steps. This old street was evidently the main thoroughfare that had led from the ancient landing up through a steep cut in a very high bank to the flood-safe plain above. This, our own theory, was strengthened when we found at the main street level a large monument erected in honour of the pioneers of Louisville and also to our now familiar friend, Colonel George Rogers Clark, the same we had

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“met” on the memorial tablet at Paducah. Probably, many a sturdy log cabin or picturesque house of rough stone had lined, in early days, that old step-terraced street and the bank above. Even now, there were old shops that one entered by stepping *down* from the sidewalk level. Doubtless, “Step” Street, in the early eighteen hundreds, was Louisville’s “Broadway.” But the most interesting architectural relics of that, or the immediately succeeding period, are to be found about two miles below the city at the Lock Village, where the boats pass through the canal. A street car, caught at the monument, will take a visitor halfway to the village, the car going through what is evidently the older part of the city.

Louisville probably came into existence as many Canadian communities did—as a “portage,” the Falls of the Ohio calling for a “portage” of two miles or so in the early days. If the observing eye of a student of such things was not misled by what it saw, then that street car ride and subsequent stroll across the flats to the Lock Village gave evidence that a diagram of the very earliest Louisville would show a dual community, shaped like a “dumb-bell”—the upper “bell” resting on old “Step” Street and the lower one on the Lock Village. The bar connecting the two “bells” would be the long



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narrow trail of the old portage way. "Lock Village," by the way, is a "Pathfinder" name.

The bridge that crosses the modern canal takes the visitor over to the ancient village among grassy, bush-grown lanes and patriarchal trees. The old canal partly paralleling the new one was too small for the steamers of to-day and is visible now only as a bit of the old entrance, giving interesting proof of the simplicity of early-day construction. Far beneath the bridge we saw an overloaded little steamboat dozing dreamily, as it seemed, while being "locked through" to the lower river, the foam-flecked surface of which bore eloquent testimony to the crashing, twisting torture it had undergone in the falls above.

When one leaves the neatly kept grounds of the lock-keeper's house and turns into the narrow road nearby, tidiness gives way to picturesque disorder. An old lane full of trees, half smothered by a "dump" of dirt and rock that sloped high above it, came into view. Poor old lane!—it was trying hard to still be a decent avenue of approach to one or two weather-beaten cottages that clung forlornly to one side of it. They seemed terrified at Death as *they* saw it coming in the threat of the overshadowing dump. More old streets; ancient and windlassed wells at the top of which swung iron-bound buckets.

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Decayed little houses, "tipsy" from sunken foundations, either leaned over drearily, or were propped up into the perpendicular; others had been patched up into giving shelter to humble tenants who seemed richer in their fertile gardens than in the possession of their decrepit cottages.

But all the buildings in the old Lock Village were not small or tottering. One there was of ample size, having a flower-decked and bee-ful garden; a garden blooming, in a modest autumnal way, with many a "last rose of summer" and its companions of the colour-riot days of leafy June. A border of mossy stone wall and thriving young fruit trees gave privacy for the owner and opportunity for unobtrusive admiration by the chance (very chance!) passer-by. The solid, low house and the beautiful garden gave one the feeling of seeing a plump little dowager who knew how to grow old quite gracefully.

But how different was her tall, stern sister farther down the lane! Here we found a very *grande dame* of a stiffly upstanding four-story mansion—old, silent and forbidding. Rows of lifeless-looking windows and a vast-spaced veranda spoke of a once proud hostess,—a hostess who had royally received and lodged whole droves of guests in the bygone time when flowered waistcoats held powdered curls against their velvet's softness. But now all was dark, desolate,

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and stern with the bitterness of desertion—hopeless, final. For, over there outlined against the sky, bulked the mass of modern Louisville—the Jacob who had taken this Esau's pottage.

An extended stroll around the village showed that it was situated on a high, rocky peninsula that swelled out roundly into the river for a mile or so below the falls. On its river frontage are precipitous cliffs of rock fully seventy feet above the rushing froth-bubbled surface of the Ohio. A massive ruin of stone, with iron beams imbedded therein, showed that an attempt to bridge the stream had failed.

From these ruins (which dominate the crest of the peninsula) the ground slopes easily westward, finally spreading out into a fertile fan-shaped tract of farmland. In pioneer days that piece of flat land was the point of re-embarkation, refitting and also of residence for the workmen and settlers generally. Extensive boatyards, lines of crude shops, rough-and-ready lodging houses and cheerful taverns formed a compact and busy community. To-day the fluttering pennants of half-stripped cornstalks stood guard, in serried ranks, over great yellow pumpkins growing corpulent under the soft, maturing heat of the Indian-summer sun.

Late that afternoon, we took the big, round-sterned old side-wheel ferryboat that connects the

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Kentucky metropolis with the quaint old Hoosier county seat, Jeffersonville, just across, and slightly up-river. We had been attracted to it by its tree-shaded roofs showing red and grey along the top of the high, sloping bank. Because the place looked paintable, we had deferred our departure until the sun, sinking low in the west, sent long shadows from the great railway bridge that towered above the landing there. "Grey" days and late afternoons were, as we mentioned before, the sketching times most preferred by our artists.

The town had still another attraction for us,—it was the local "Gretna Green" for the Kentucky lovers who did not wish to marry at home.

This we had first learned when we enquired of a Louisville levee loafer what interest Jeffersonville had to offer.

"It's the runaway marryin' place," he had replied with a grin.

Accordingly, when we stepped ashore over there, we cast our eyes up at the houses on the top of the bank for some evidences of a "Gretna Green," and were soon amusedly reading aloud a blatant sign that read:

### MARRYING MAGISTRATE.

But we found that that aspect of the local colour had already come to meet *us* without waiting for us to go to *it*! It came in the person of

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a rather abashed little middle-aged man who quietly, hat in hand, *eased* into the Pathfinder's fingers a card; surprised, the latter looked quickly at the man and then at the card, read it—laughed—and, turning to the others, exclaimed:

“Gadzooks, we're on the firing-line already—this is the card of one of their marrying magistrates!”

The three friends put their heads together, and read the following doggerel:

“When little Cupid speeds his darts,  
And deeply wounds two loving hearts,  
To heal the burning pangs they feel  
To Hymen's court they take appeal.  
Then Judge . . . (name on sign given) . . . makes  
A brief decision for their sakes;  
Says he, ‘I'll sentence you for life’—  
Go and be happy, man and wife.”

So-o, the card-presenter was the magistrate himself! He was now edging off in a crestfallen sort of way, for he saw that he had wrongly “spotted” us. We watched him as he ambled up the steep, pebbly bank to the tall old house at the top, heard him clomp, clomp, up the absurdly high and steep narrow steps, and saw him enter the weather-beaten door under a gorgeously painted new sign that announced to the world that within were:

### JUDGE X'S WEDDING PARLORS.

Ascending to the top of the bank, we found that the main street had come out of town that

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far and then suddenly stopped,—as if frightened on seeing the river. It was apparently too timid to run down to the ferry landing to meet the people and guide them smoothly up the rough bank as a helpful, well-trained little thoroughfare should have done. However, we turned into the little main street and soon found ourselves being furtively scrutinized from half-opened doors and curtained windows, while from one long, low window we were quite openly stared at. Looking at the high narrow door of the house, we guessed the reason, for quite a gay and attractive (?) sign invited us to:

COME IN.

### WEDDINGS PERFORMED AT SHORT NOTICE.

The Pathfinder pair, well seasoned in Matrimony, marched on, but the “single” Painter Man seemed rooted to the spot by some subtle fascination, and gazed furtively up and down the deserted street as if looking for some—any—village maiden to play “bride” to his “groom.” But we loved him too well to have him overtaken by fate so suddenly—and he so far from home! So we coaxed him into a candy store and had him drown his regrets in the foaming depths of a chocolate soda.

The pleasant old town proved to be somewhat

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larger than one would think when viewing it from the Louisville side. Not far from the landing we found a cosy old house that had a well-preserved New Orleans "iron-lace" balcony; also, four beautifully moulded window casings and a dignified old doorway with a fan-shaped transom of richly frosted glass. There was a nice old church, too, set amid spacious grounds after the manner of olden times.

The main town sits safely behind and below its high, grassy levee, so, in order to study the place from that elevation, we ascended a short, steep street to the top of the bank. Up there a surprise awaited us. Right down the centre of the summit ran a narrow ribbon of cobblestoned lane, very much like those one finds on the top of some of the "dykes" in Holland. There were some modest little cottages scattered along each side of the tiny thoroughfare, and they were quite sketchable. Indeed, on the whole, we found old Jeffersonville rather interesting from an artist's standpoint.

A mile or so above the little town were important shipyards from which some fast and famous "packets" had been launched.

The next two days were devoted to ordinary sightseeing. We motored about under the guidance of a gentleman who very intelligently showed us the Louisville of To-day.

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It is a prosperous, well-built city of some three hundred thousand people, and exports prodigious amounts of whiskey and tobacco. If the citizens ever need to "sleep off" the effects of their own whiskey, there is a magnificent acreage of woodsy, shrubby parks; or, if they wish to enjoy a quiet smoke of their own tobacco, there are velvet downs of rolling greensward on which to loll. Another Louisville product, pretty women, can be seen during the shopping promenade in the afternoons.

In the business district, we found bright shops, well-appointed "movie" theatres, and, close by, a dignified old church with quite an imposing tower. Its presence there, hemmed in by great modern business blocks, reminded us somewhat of Old Trinity and St. Paul's Chapel on lower Broadway.

Over towards the river, we found the famous tobacco market. It is probably the world's greatest. We walked about in the soft gloom of the long, low-roofed warehouses, pleasurably sniffing the aroma from treble tiers of gigantic hogsheads of the fragrant weed. On regular market days, a double line of these great barrels line the sides of the street, and much aroma, much sampling and much bargaining ensue.

There is a "crack" line of smart side-wheel packets plying between Louisville and Cincinnati



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—a delightful trip of one hundred and fifty miles. The leaving hour is five in the evening, and there is accommodation for hundreds of passengers, who, after a day's business or pleasure in either city, may enjoy a good, cool night's sleep, while being smoothly carried to their destinations.

On Sundays there is a daylight excursion, and a very sensible and pleasing arrangement whereby the boats meet at a halfway point. The "meet-the-boat" excursionists then "swap" steamers, as it were, and return home for a late supper. That famous line of Cincinnati-Louisville packets is a proud one, being the successor, "in a straight line," of United States mail boats that were established in 1820.

It pleased us to see our beloved river being so well appreciated, and so busy! Some day our great waterways will be utilized far more than they are to-day; even the brilliant river history of a generation ago will be quite eclipsed.

We were to leave for Cincinnati on Sunday's boat; but with Sunday's dawn—lo, the blinding mantle of the fog! Scores of shadowy figures were already waiting on the wharf when we reached it, after a light and hurried breakfast. The boat was late. We waited and waited, chilled to the bone, and oppressed by the quiet

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of our fog-silenced world. Finally, we found an upstairs waiting-room, which was stuffily heated by a hot little stove and crowded with women and children. Hour after hour went by and, though rumours were rife, no definite information was obtainable, because, it being Sunday, there was no official in the place—only a watchman. The latter was finally prevailed upon to telephone to some nearby point up-river and get some news, if possible, of the expected steamer. Presently, the man came from the 'phone and said: "Well, I done got some news, all right. The old boat's a-comin'; her captain is sure some fog navigaterer, too! The agent at the other landin' said she come in there *a-feelin'* her way in by the shore willers, —an' left there the same way. She's only makin' three miles an hour, but she's a-comin', and we are to look for her to show up here by one o'clock. Say" (with a sudden inspiration, as he looked at an enormous silver watch), "say, folks, you-all what's hungry had better hurry to the nearest res'trant and git back—'cause dinner'll be over on the boat by the time she gets here. . . . Hurry back now," was his parting shot; "for the boat'll turn around quick and shoot right back up the hill again."

How he ever visualized a "shooting" up the hill at three miles an hour, we did not stop then

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to question, but began to plan, not "a run for our money," but a run for our lunch.

The Pathfinder, being fleet of foot and willing, was allowed to go for some sandwiches. He went rather far uptown in order to escape the clamorous rush of the other passengers at the nearer eating places—and that came near being his undoing; for the steamer's whistle and bell sounded out of the fog sooner than was expected, and brought the diners who were within distant earshot running back to the wharf. The Pathfinder, too far away to hear these sounds, and depending on the "one o'clock" statement, came into view through the now thinning fog, walking at an agonizingly slow gait. His companions waved and shouted, quite on "edge" by the prospect of being left behind; for every one else was on board. Awakened suddenly to the situation, the food-laden Pathfinder tried to run with arms outstretched, for he held in each hand a package of sandwiches and from each little finger dangled and swangled a paper carton of hot and oozy soup! If he ran, the soup spilled; if he walked, the boat sailed! poor, kindly Pathfinder,—the tray-bearer;—the soup-carrier! Would he make it? Sending Mrs. Pathfinder on board, the big Californian rushed forward to the rescue!—seized the soup and leaped aboard followed by

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his still package-burdened friend. The incident was hugely enjoyed by both passengers and crew—we enjoyed the soup!

As we passed under the upper bridge, there came a faint “Hurrah” from the passengers; for the sun was slowly showing itself as a pale white ball. The mist-streamers were passing across its face in final flight before a warm, south wind which we, on the water, did not feel until several minutes later. When the breeze reached the river, it rolled up the fog-blanket like a scroll, and lo, the day was warm and bright!

The “City of Cincinnati,” tormented by a night of fog and “three miles an hour,” leaped forward through the “slack water” formed by the great dam, at almost railway speed.

They are swift craft,—those two express-boats;—the sister ship to ours was named the “City of Louisville” and held a record of twenty-six miles an hour downstream. It was most interesting to us to learn, too, that the upstream trip usually required about one hour more than the down trip.

Although the Ohio River at Louisville is said to be at its widest there—a little more than a mile—it soon began to be slightly narrower than we had, so far, seen it. Farms, settlements, villages and towns grew much more numerous, too.

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Madison, on the Indiana shore, some fifty miles above Louisville, has a peculiar site at the mouth of a ravine-like valley, out of which it seems to "ooze" and spread out like an Alpine glacier. Near Madison, high bluffs slope steeply backward from the river, with many a wooded canyon and crested ridge. Viewing them from a steamer's deck, one is prone to call them "hills"; but they are not,—they are only the steep sides of the deep water-channel that the Ohio has cut during post-glacial ages through the general level of the region. The real hills are mostly south of the Ohio.

Dinner and early darkness prevented us from getting anything more than the vaguest impression of Carrollton, the "meet-the-boat" landing for the Sunday excursionists. This town would have been interesting to see and explore; for it is an old port of trans-shipment, being at the confluence of the Kentucky with the Ohio.

A voyage up the smaller river would, no doubt, be worth while; for the region through which it flowed is replete with historic interest; the scenery also is said by experienced travellers to be worth going many miles to see.

For more than a generation, the sturdy little stream has borne the burden of transporting freight and passengers out from its early-settled valley, carrying its cargoes to the outer world

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by way of the mother-stream at Carrollton. It is said that the Kentucky is the first Western river whose navigation was improved by State-built dams and locks. Also, the busy little river is actually credited with nearly thirty more miles of navigation than there are between Louisville and Cincinnati.

By it, Frankfort, the interesting old capital of Kentucky, is directly linked to big, modern Louisville, by a line of fast little steamers that have to navigate fully two hundred and fifty miles between the two. What surprisingly long distances one can travel on the southern tributaries of the Ohio!

After Carrollton, night settled over the river and all we could see from our cosy corner by the warm smokestacks was the clustered lights at landings, and fainter the glow of oil lamps in farmhouses, as we steamed steadily upstream.

Just before bedtime the boat stopped at a landing that served two villages. They were on opposite sides of the river, but it seems they are quite "loving twins." Their names, Vevay and Ghent, aroused in us romantic speculations about their history. Flemish or Swiss founders, surely, we agreed; enquiry proved us partly correct. In the early eighteen hundreds a company of intrepid Swiss, journeying through the then wild frontier, discovered this picturesque, fertile spot

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and founded here their colony. How we wished it were daylight. Some day we hope to make the river trip again, and do it in the "reverse," seeing by daylight the places we first passed at night.

Besides the interesting history of the Swiss settlers, Vivay is said to be the place where Edward Eggleston found most of the literary material for his stories of Hoosier life and folk. Eggleston taught school there, and an old brick building is shown as the place where his pupils assembled for their lessons in years gone by.

These and other interesting stories about that part of the Louisville-to-Cincinnati river trip were told to us by a gentlemanly, middle-aged Kentuckian whom we had met at supper. The Pathfinder, wishing to order a social glass for all of us, was mildly surprised when the man ordered mineral water.

"I thought you would order whiskey—aren't you a Kentuckian?" remarked the Painter Man smilingly.

"I am," replied the other, "and a whiskey drummer at that!"—whereat we all laughed heartily. The gentleman told us that the mineral water came from a certain "Big Bone Spring," so named because of the discovery near it of huge fossil bones. The spring forms the source of a brook that flows into the Ohio.

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Farther up was a little landing named "Split Rock," a favourite place for picnickers, because of the natural curiosity there. This was a geological "fault" or chasm, close on to a hundred feet deep and about four times as long.

Our new acquaintance was a quiet man, given to short, thoughtful silences during the conversation. He broke one of these by suddenly asking:

"Of course, you-all know that old play, 'Blue Jeans'? . . . Well, the scene of it was laid up here a ways"—pointing forward with his yet unlighted cigar—"on the Indiana side, at Rising Sun."

Evidently stimulated by our absorbed interest, he went on:

"My poor old dad used to run a little old shin-plaster of a paper down in Tennessee, and he often said he was going to write a book about the Ohio, if he ever got rich enough to have the leisure to do it. . . . He would say to me, 'Son, that old river has lots of stories to tell, if folks only knew how to listen to it.'"

It was the "whiskey man" who reminded us that a former President was buried on the north bank of the Ohio. The tomb of William Henry Harrison ("Old Tippecanoe") is in full view of passing steamboats, being on ground that is still a part of the vast estates of the Harrisons.



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That great land-holding once extended all the way along the Ohio from the mouth of the Little Miami, close to Cincinnati, to the mouth of the Big Miami—nearly thirty miles. Near the junction of the latter stream with the Ohio was the place selected for “Old Tippecanoe’s” last resting-place, it being close to the old Harrison mansion in which he was born.

It is grimly unfortunate, it seemed to us, that the town just above the dignified and massive tomb of the famous President should have become a place of great coke-ovens that, at night, send over the land a weird glare of smoky flames!

The history of the Harrisons is inseparably connected, not only with our general national history, but also with the State-story of Ohio, from the earliest down to the most modern times. For, from that old family mansion at the mouth of the Miami came yet another President—Benjamin Harrison—the grandson of rugged “Old Tippecanoe.”

“Do you care to fish?” enquired the Kentuckian, as we shook hands and said “good-night.” We were not enthusiasts in that particular line, as it happened; but we saw that our pleasant friend was, so we encouraged him to tell us some “fish” stories. One of them we remember especially, because the scene of it was the mouth of the Miami,

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which we had just passed. That point has been a favourite fishing place for many years—and for many fishermen, it seems. Catfish of really startling proportions had been caught there.\*

Some time towards morning we were awakened by everything on board becoming still and silent. The steamer was fog-bound! Too drowsy to care very much, we went back to sleep, and remained so, until startled into wakefulness by the breakfast gong. We peeped out of our window and saw that the fog was thinning and the boat slowly moving on again. A steamy sort of vapour arose from the surface of the river in curious wispy spirals.

Soon the shadowy cobwebbing of the great suspension bridge passed slowly overhead. How delicately it was etched against the mist-sky in which the lofty towers were almost lost to sight! Across the clearing waters spectral spires came vaguely into view; next, loomy houses and unreal groups of trees rose out of the silvery mists and we exclaimed:

“O—h!—Cincinnati!”

\* More than two years later, the author, getting up from the desk whereon he was writing the “Point Pleasant” chapter of this book, picked up the morning paper and read this:

“TEN BIG CATFISH CAUGHT.

“Two fishermen, near the mouth of the Great Miami, caught ten catfish that totalled 861 pounds. The men found the fish in the bulkhead of an old, sunken coal barge. They captured them with gigs, the largest weighing 103 and the smallest 52 pounds.”

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But we were wrong. It was Covington, Kentucky, the big, pleasant town situated on the banks of the Licking, which joins the Ohio directly across from the Cincinnati levee.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Cincinnati*

IF New Orleans is the Queen City of the Mississippi, and her co-rulers of the upper river are the Princely Ports of St. Louis and St. Paul, then Cincinnati is likewise regal!

She is enthroned on the noble hills above her stream, Empress and Mistress-Central of the whole Ohio. Cincinnati sits halfway along *her* busy river, so that all through-borne traffic, bound up, bound down, must pay her tribute.

Art, the Poor Young Gentleman of our national family life, might even pay his painter's mite of tribute (and verily 'twould be as meagre as the proverbial widow's!), for Cincinnati could be used as headquarters while sketching trips were made up or down the river. And Cincinnati, itself, in addition to the levee, is quite paintable.

How very many subjects an artist might find from a point near the south fence of the famous Rookwood pottery, at the top of the Great Incline! There one can look down and across to a central mass of sky-scrapers and chimneys—

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to the river beyond and the suspension bridge spanning it—to the roofs and towers and spires of Covington half hidden in the treetops,—and all of it veiled in a paintable haze of smoke. The whole picture was framed in an ultimate background of soft-toned Kentucky hills.

We found yet another inspiring spot a few blocks north of the main shopping district. It was a long strip of park-like space bordered with trees and centred with grass. At one end were interesting-looking towers outlined against the afternoon sky and at the other end was an old house pleasantly shaped. But the favourite place for the artists was time-mellowed and smoke-toned Fountain Square; here, “once upon a time,” in a less smoky atmosphere than the industrial one of to-day, was probably a tiny park, for there yet remained two or three trees under whose scraggly branches a graceful fountain danced and played.

The air of the place, especially up on the long and high stone terrace of the fountain platform, is rather Parisian—that tall, splashing fountain, the few odd trees, the green benches occupied by scattered groups of persons watching—watching from that safe retreat the surging of the city’s life all about them. . . . Yes, that was it—it was a bit of Paris! There was even an old-fashioned cab-stand near the eastern end of



A STREET NEAR FOUNTAIN SQUARE, CINCINNATI



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the terrace, and one felt a strong inclination to go to the edge of the stonework and call out—"Fiacre!" Time-softened little fountain-space!—you are a dainty French lozenge dropped into the vast mosaic of our mellowing Middle West!

Covington-over-the-Bridges is quite interesting, too. In the comely spacious way of Yesterday, she charms with many a quaint old house and garden. She lends, but only for the day, her loyal Kentuckians to the prosperous and kindly Northern Lady across the river, and when evening comes she looks, with hand shading her anxious eyes, for the long procession of her sons and daughters returning home across the bridges.

As was our usual custom, we had planned to go down to *work* about the levee as soon as our trunks were unpacked. But first one attraction and then another had held us until we found that Madam Cincinnati, with her finished and matronly charms, had lured us into the *play* of sightseeing instead. So, when she caught us on the top of a high mountain (the lofty point at the head of the Great Incline), she did straightway tempt us further, saying:

"Ah, I see that you admire me—enjoy *this* and then let me show you still more of my attractions. Surely" (as she noted our hesitating, side-long glances at the neglected levee far below), "surely, you, being Artist Folk, will come with



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me to my Art Gallery? 'Tis just above, on that parked and wooded eminence!"

We just simply had to yield to such temptation and to such a temptress! Thus began a regular "spree" of sightseeing. First the Art Gallery and then the wonderfully picturesque park, so sensibly left, in a great measure, to its native charm of wildness. After that came the splendid "Zoo," where we were on the point of hiring the elephant to pull the Painter Lady away, for she is a great lover of "God's poor dumb creatures," as she refers to them. Evidently the little lady is graciously deaf to the shingle-loosening trumpeting of the trunk-dangling pachyderm or the hair-raising roar of the frowsy-headed lion, to say nothing of the other raucous noises given forth by a well-fed "Zoo."

Then followed long trolley rides out into expanding suburbs where we saw beautiful homes, splendid schools, colleges and hospitals. After a day and a half of this delightfully "riotous living," Madam Cincinnati said to us: "I thank you for your kind attention. I really must not monopolize you any longer, but *do* run over and visit that dear old Kentucky neighbour of mine, Dame Covington." And so we did her bidding once again—and explored Covington.

Returning at twilight across the upper bridge now vibrant with the tread of many feet—for





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toilers were homeward bound—we looked down at our beloved levee. How delicately beautiful it was in those few and fleeting moments of twilight! It was a colour-poem of soft greys—with the warm glow of cabin lights on anchored boats—and feathery columns of soft, black smoke gracefully spreading to a level plane in a westward drift. An old red-walled warehouse at the levee's top did much to soften the rather garish glitter of an arc light—the only thing not in harmony with the picture. Even the lace-like silhouette of the great Suspension Bridge was itself atwinkle and glowing with the many moving lights of an early autumn evening.

Early next morning we went at last to the waterfront and sketched there steadily for three joyous days.

A block or two from the levee we found a district of old brick houses with stone stairways leading to wide, fan-transomed doors—doors through which had passed many wealthy householders or guests of the fashionable hotels, in days when river traffic reigned supreme. But alas! its former glory had departed, and the fate of the “tenement” had come in its stead.

The levee at Cincinnati is the busiest of all the river ports of the Ohio. A painter of groups and figures could sketch there for weeks. Long lines of freight-“toting” darkies and knots of

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idlers—roustabouts working, roustabouts loafing, roustabouts skylarking—are *all* there. During the day and far into the night passenger packets with crowded decks arrive and depart. Columns of black smoke rise, pillar-like, in the usually still air, with sometimes a slow bending to the horizontal, due to the pressure of winds that blow across the river from the level of the hills above. Or, sometimes dishevelled, like a woman's hair, the compact black columns will get but a few feet above the stacks and then be tossed, torn or pressed down to the surface of the water by some prankish puff of wind convoying a passing shower. Now and then, sharply outlined against the black paint of the smokestacks, come sudden jets of silvery steam from viciously popping safety-valves. Later, when the boat is under way, these vertical upshoots die down to ferny, frond-like wisps of vapour that lend a piquant tracery to a sketch in "black and white." Sometimes (and for some mystery of mechanics unknown to simple artist folk) there is a very interesting effect produced when the steam referred to comes out of the tall, twin smokestacks and is mixed to varying tones of pearly grey in the rolling, boiling, sooty-black smoke.

Constant motion and colour are given, too, by the getting "under way" to go, or the slowing up to "stop" of many types and sizes of craft.

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There is much sloshing and flopping of stern wheels, both large and small. This breaks up the brown water into heavy sprays of tan, tipped with creamy white at the edges. Meanwhile, many miniature cascades falling backward from the rising paddle are turned into light browns, yellowed greys and ambered whites when the sun strikes full upon them.

And then the sounds! Horns and bells and hissing steam! And how strangely deliberate are the “whuu-uf-uffs” of the “exhaust” ster-torously coughed out, as it were, from the wide, sooty throats of the tall stacks. Cutting into this, come head-jarring roars from the fog horns of passing coal tows, and deep-toned clangs from the broad-chested bells of departing packets. Spirited contributions to this medley of sounds—given by the Covington ferries and small dart-about launches—consist of shrieky-treble whistles and the funny “pang-a-pang-pang” of seemingly cracked little bells on fussy little ferry-ettes. Such is the levee of Cincinnati.

The artists of our party in recording, on the spot, their impressions in colour and charcoal, worked with an added joy and exaltation; for the gallant French were striking hard at the battle of Champagne.

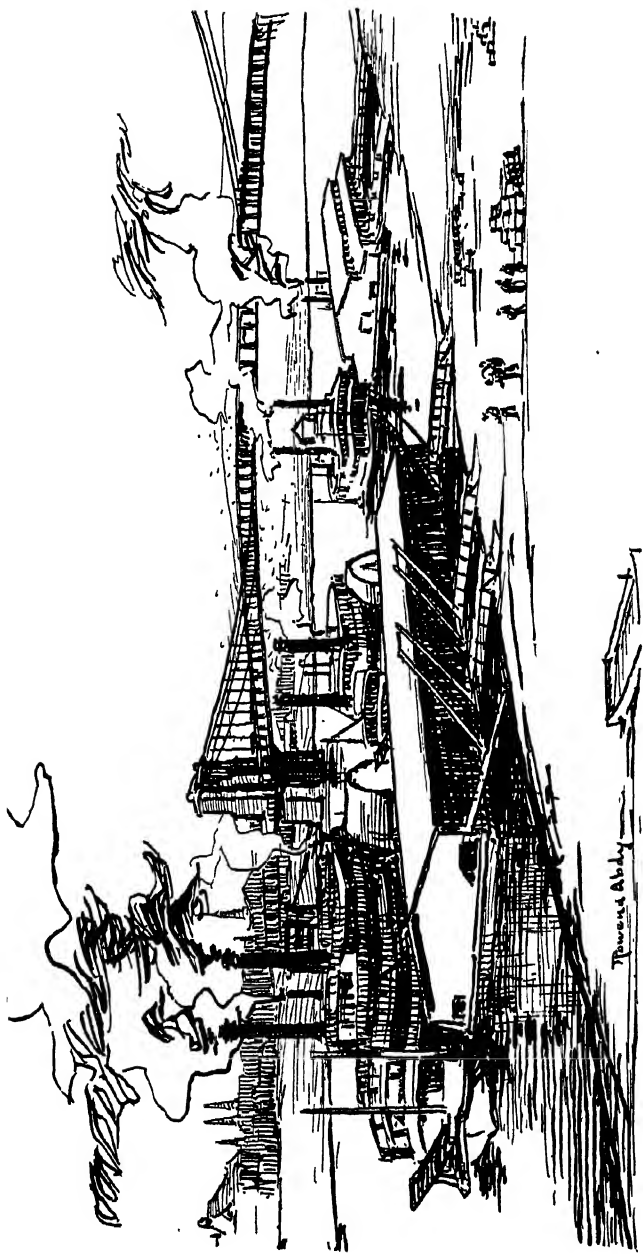
But alas, now—some two and a half years later—as the *Chronicler* is weaving *his* impres-

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sions of that waterfront into descriptive words and phrases, his soul is sore distraught with strained suspense as Germany's gigantic March "offensive" threatens to overwhelm the Allies now battling so bravely on the plains of Picardy.

There came an evening when the Pathfinder went down to the levee to join the artists on their homeward stroll. While he waited for them to put away their sketches, a tally-clerk with whom he had had several chats beckoned "come here" with his pencil. The man told him of a fog and another freshet that was reported as coming down the river; that the "Tired Susie" (as a certain boat will hereafter be referred to) was going to tie-up on the "Kannoy" (Kanawha) for the winter, and that her departure the following evening would be her last up-river trip for the season. This was something of a bombshell in our camp; for the "Tired Susie" was the boat that was to have given us our connections with a Pittsburg-bound packet.

By lunch time the following day all sketching had ceased, and packing-up had begun. We were not to sail until five o'clock; so, after seeing that our baggage was safely aboard the wharfboat, we decided to take a farewell look at the city from the centre of the Suspension Bridge. We have always been glad since that we did so; for the general view one gets from that spot, even when



CINCINNATI, LEVEE WHARFBOATS





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the afternoon is only partially clear, should be a cherished memory of Cincinnati.

Two of us had such a memory—a memory brought back from a wonderful night in Spain—a night when we, leaning over a terrace-wall on the Alhambra hill, saw the ancient city of Granada bathed in limpid moonlight far below.

Tourists visiting this river metropolis should make a point to look at it from the Suspension Bridge as well as from the top of the Great Incline. Not because this view of Cincinnati is so very wonderful, but, for an American city—and a Middle Western one at that—it is unusually impressive and pleasing. Begin, say, with the immediate foreground, which would be the cables and railing of the bridge; then the glance sweeps to the surface of the river below. Note the movement of the many craft upon it. Look upward and outward to the busy, colourful levee—to the old houses, tall and steep-gabled—up—up—up—the successive terraces of solidly built city, until the wooded hill of the park comes green to the eye. Up still higher to a castle-like tower that shows as picturesquely above the treetops as might any castle on the Rhine.

The Pathfinder was now bending over the bridge rail, gazing fixedly at the waterfront.

“What do you see down there?” asked his companions.

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"It's what I *do not* see that is troubling me," he replied, adding: "Our boat is to leave at five o'clock—here it is almost four, and she is nowhere in sight!"

We hurried down to the wharf full of uneasy misgiving.

"No boat for you to-night, gentlemen . . . sorry . . . 'Susie's' quit,—stuck in the mud, miles away . . . let you know more to-morrow," was the hurried and staccato-like reply to our questions given by an official who seemed to be a very harassed and testy individual. The Painter Man, towering over him, was about to try to extract some more information; but at that instant the harassed one snatched up the receiver of the telephone—it had been ringing repeatedly—and began to snap and snarl into it so bitterly and so long, that we drifted, downcast, out of the office.

While our two men paced back and forth under the shed and tried to counter-plan (the while swearing softly), there came up to them a genial wharfman—to whom they had often spoken. *He* told them why the "Tired Susie" would not sail that night.

It was a rather laughable story—poor "Susie's" story—after all. The fog and the freshet had played naughty pranks with her. She had tied up early the evening before. Morn-

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ing came, noon came, and still the "Tired Susie" slept easefully in the fog, tied securely against the current's pressure to some sturdy bushes on the bank. By late afternoon the fog had gone;—but so had the freshet—and the "Susie" found that, having "tied up" over a mud-bar on a *rising* river, she was now left hard and fast by a *falling* one! So, after a mad hour's racing of her wheel in the watery mud, her engines had "given out" and, with slow, despairing "whuu-uff" the "Tired Susie" had snoozled down still deeper into the silt and gone to her winter's rest.

Thanking the wharfman, we started away to tell the sad news to the Painter Lady, when our path was playfully blocked by another of our levee friends. He was a river captain with whom we had swapped several amusing yarns.

"We—ell," he roared heartily, as he shook hands with us, "we—ell, who done stole yore candy?"—referring to the dismay written on our faces. We poured our troubles into his ear like tearful children—the tall Painter Man having to stoop considerably in order not to *spill* any of his—for the jolly steamboat man was rather short.

"Yes," he remarked, when our sad tale was told, "I've just heard all about it from the 'Susie's' freight clerk,—her captain sent him

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to town by rail to arrange for a sub, to take her 'run.' Poor old 'Susie,' she's got herself all mixed and messed up in the mud just below Lowry's Landing. Let's go see old Daddy Brown about the substitute."

"Daddy Brown" proved to be the harassed official whom we had already interviewed. When the latter saw us convoyed by the Captain, he looked up and said apologetically:

"I forgot to tell you two gentlemen that there would be some boat found to take the 'Susie's' run to-morrow evening. You must excuse my being sorter 'short' with you awhile ago;—that bothersome nigger boss of the shore roustabouts surely had me all riled up."

We bore him no ill-will; in fact, now that we were to get away on the morrow, we could have readily forgiven any number of repentant old duffers.

Next evening, just before five o'clock, we found the "Susie's" substitute all ready to cast off. She was fairly bulging with freight. The sides of the cargo deck stuck out with overhanging goods, giving an effect—when you looked end-on—of a garbage-bloated goat! The "Bustling Billy" (that's to be "her" name here) had a "Junior" tacked on to her proper name; she was the proud though very small successor of a famous

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“Senior” that had held many speed and cargo records before being sunk in collision.

Promptly at five o'clock, the big “leaving” bell of the Louisville packet boomed out. In the midst of that roll of sound, the “Bustling Billy,” champing *her* bit, as it were, blew three “chesty” sort of blasts, as if to show that she, too, was ready on schedule time. The fat little freighter and the long, many-decked passenger packet backed out into the stream together.

We stood at the stern and waved cheerily to the passengers on the other boat, which proved to be our gallant, old fog-defying friend, the “City of Cincinnati.” She was quite an impressive sight, as with rolling smoke, hissing steam, and splashing paddle wheels, she slipped under the great span of the high suspension bridge and headed for Louisville.

Gallant old packet! Little we knew that we were bidding you “good-bye” forever! For two years later, in the sun-bathed garden of a cloistered old Californian Mission, the Painter Man, freshly arrived from direct contact with the outer world, found the Chronicler at work on this story of the river, and said:

“Say, Pathfinder, our old friend, the ‘City of Cincinnati’ was crushed in an ice gorge this winter . . . I saw her being crushed . . . it was in the ‘movies’ in San Francisco—one of those

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‘Pathé weekly’ films, you know;—it really made me sad.”

Just then, the Painter Lady came along and began to set up her easel, preparatory to sketching the Mission’s beautiful façade, as seen from the “Apostle’s Garden.” We told her the old boat’s obituary.

“Oh, I can’t work *now*,” she murmured sadly, as she flicked a tear from her eyelash.

“Neither can I,” said the Chronicler, putting away his manuscript.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *A Two-Days' Voyage*

We Pass General Grant's Native Town—A Fairy-like Village.

WE were glad to have an hour of twilight in which to see the river scenery just above Cincinnati; we saw further proof of the excellence of the location, the attractiveness and industrial importance of the Ohio's metropolis. Even the noble river seemed to have prepared this region as a throne whereon to place its queen. Ages ago, the great stream seemed to understand that any river, ambitious to have an important city founded on its banks, must sober down and check its rollicking twists and turns. It had therefore straightened out a bit a league or so above the prospective site, and had become a long, straight stretch of water, dignified and decorous, both in width of surface and speed of current.

Just above the city, the hills on the Ohio side assume an unusual character and dignity, while the broad slopes that run up and inland into fair Kentucky sweep away before the eye with that impressive majesty of vast spaciousness so frequently seen in American landscapes.



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Darkness and the supper gong came together; so we went below. Judge of our pleased surprise to find that the "Bustling Billy's" captain was none other than the one who had cheered us in the hour of our despair on the previous day! Not only was it he; but he had reserved for us the seats of honour at his end of the long, narrow dining table.

"Kinda thought I'd like to have you Californians near me. We have a two-day trip ahead of us, you know; so it's worth while to get better acquainted, eh? Mighty few all-night passengers at this time of the year—and ladies, almost never," he concluded, bestowing a friendly smile on the Painter Lady and a young farmer-mother, sitting opposite.

Despite the simple fare and the red tablecloth, it was such a jolly little supper! There were naïve attempts at "style" and "service," because a lady from strange parts—a young lady who "made real oil paintings" of the river and boats—was dining there. All this added to our quiet amusement.

The young under-officers who sat nearby were rather shy at first, but when the talk flowed easily and pleasantly of other lands and other rivers, they would look up from their plates and smile or question with a quick intelligence.

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

Toward the end of the meal, the topic of conversation turned to the prospects of being tied up by fog before midnight. One passenger, a cheerful and talkative little Hebrew—he was a merchant somewhere up-river — gloated with rather loud voice and expansive smile because *his* landing was safely *below* a certain bend that was often infamously fouled with fog.

“Keptin,—I schust bet you fife dollas I schleep in mine own bedt at home to-night!” he boldly wagered.

His reference to the possible foggiess of the river above *his* landing quite filled the young farmer and his wife with misgivings; for they lived two landings *above* the foggy bend. The mother, holding her baby on one arm, while she tried to use both her knife and fork with the other, turned to her spouse and exclaimed:

“Law-zee, Ezra, we jest got ter get to California to-night!—an’ that’s *two* landings *above* his’n!”

“California!”—We of the “Golden State” were, to put it mildly, somewhat startled.

“Get to California *to-night*?” burst out the Pathfinder, who sat next to her. She and her husband looked up with an odd, puzzled smile.

The Captain grasping the situation, the while he held a forkful of food between plate and

## ON THE OHIO

mouth, smiled broadly for a moment at the three Californians and the two Kentuckians; then he said slowly, with a twinkle in his eye:

“That’s right,—that’s—right,—the whole five of you *are* Californians—of a kind, sure enough. Listen——”

But he was interrupted by the farmer folk, who addressing us said:

“But you-all don’t belong at *our* landing?”

The Captain, waving his fork for silence, said to the Kentuckians: “This lady and the two gentlemen here are from the California that’s way out yonder—and—” (now addressing *us*)—this lady and gentleman are residents of California Landing, Kentucky.”

The good-natured little Jew was gurgling gleefully at all of this, when the Captain turning swiftly on him said, quick as a flash:

“And in regard to Mr. Eckstein here,—no wonder *he’s* happy; he’s goin’ back to Palestine!—Palestine Landing,—fifteen miles above;—eh, Eckstein, old boy?” with a slap on the latter’s rounded shoulders.

Eckstein enjoyed it all hugely, and exclaimed:

“You are a quick vitter, Keptin;—if ve vare not on der Kaintuckee side of the channel, I would pay for der drinks.”

With a comic “flourish,” the Captain pressed a button under the table and stooped to speak

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

into a speaking-tube that came quickly forth from some convenient hiding-place. With a grin so broad that he could hardly pull his mouth together to speak, he called into the tube: "Say, pilot, if you can, swing 'er over into the Ohio channel behind Mussell Bed Bar. Mr. Eckstein wants to pay for the drinks!"

Our Yiddisher was a good sport, however, and as the laughter subsided he had beckoned a waiter and was asking: "Vot's yours, sairs?" As the waiter started away he was told to "Safe a chyolt for der pilot ven he comes off der vheel."

It was quite a merry party—merry as an after-dinner group on an ocean liner—which gathered that night on the upper deck of our sooty little freighter, as it pushed pluckily through the inky darkness against the ceaseless pressure of the Ohio's current. Now and then sweet autumn odours floated out to us from the bank and were welcomed sniffingly. The air was almost balmy, too,—a condition of the atmosphere that some one said portended fog in an hour or so. Here and there appeared the lights of comfortable farmer-folk at late supper, the cosy interiors being quite frankly visible through the open doors. We found unusual interest in watching the boat make her landings that evening. The steamer's whistle would announce our approach and we would turn shoreward at reduced speed.

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Soon we would see a sprinkle of stationary lights along tree-bordered lanes, and then a bib-bobbing half-dozen "Jack o' Lanterns" hurrying to some, as yet, invisible landing to meet us: "Take a line and make it fast, somebody!"—Swish!—a line would be hurled ashore and much agitation of the Jack o' Lanterns would ensue for a minute or so until the rope was made secure.

The next landing was "Palestine," and our Jewish fellow-passenger began to bid us all, individually, a cheery "good-bye." When Eckstein went ashore he was laden with multitudinous parcels and was followed by two grinning roustabouts with as many more.

"Don't forget to go see mine cousin, Moe, on Suttair Street ven you in San Francisco are again," he called out to us in farewell.

The night was still clear. Evidently, the good-humour of the evening had spread to the naughty little gnomes who brew the fog;—even Foggy Bend had left fairly clear the course to California. We arrived on schedule time, and our farmer friends found a horse and buggy awaiting them.

Though it was now nearing midnight, we still sat up in the dining-room discussing the pleasant evening that we had enjoyed. The mate, stepping in from his watch on deck to get an overcoat, remarked, "It's getting pretty chilly outside—

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

guess we're running into some thicker weather."

We went on deck and found it even as the mate had said. A very few minutes of that wet chilliness sufficed us. We had just turned to re-enter the warm cabin, when the Pathfinder called attention to a range-light just ahead. The beacon was turning sickly dull, as a weird, rolling wall of white vapour came slowly down upon us. The Creeping Silence spread all about us, shutting out of sight and sound the now darkly brooding river. We "turned in."

An hour or so later, the Pathfinder awoke slowly out of a deep sleep on hearing the sound of a wheezy, muffled whistle. There followed a loud jangling of bells from the engine-room, for our stateroom was directly above it. All motion and vibration ceased, followed by the usual disturbing stillness. We switched on the light; it was one-thirty A.M.

"What happened at half-past one this morning?" we asked the mate next day.

"Oh, the fog sent the boat plumb to sleep; so we tied her up to a fence post on the bank and took a snooze ourselves."

The steamboat men seldom lose patience at these annoyances, and usually speak jocularly of the boat's troubles and mishaps.

After being awakened by the stoppage, we were soon asleep again; but alas, not for long.

## ON THE OHIO

In fact, the balance of the night was temper-trying to the point of explosion. We "thirsted for blood." First came the muffled sounds of conversation by the now unoccupied "watch," three or four of whom were constantly and loudly interrupting each other. Stories were told and laughed at more or less boisterously. Snatches of song and whistled tunes were rendered from a repertoire all too complete.

There being no bells to call the steward and protest, we tried pounding with our shoe heels until one of the latter flew off. Still the "concert" below went on. Our knocking, if heard at all, was doubtless ascribed to the stamping stock; which latter also contributed to our unrest.

The "watch" was changed at four A.M. And surely no change of dynasty in the most despotic of countries ever brought higher hopes to suffering slaves! Would the new "watch" be garrulous, whistleiferous, or sleepily sedate? Alas, and alas—and yet another alas! They proved to be decidedly dancy-lorous! On some smooth surface they had down there, buck-and-wing steps were patted off in fast and furious fashion; this noise, with its accompaniment of chorused clapping, finally put us into such a torpor of despair that we actually went to sleep!

We slept the sleep of complete nervous exhaustion until awakened by the steamer getting

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

into motion again; daylight was creeping into the room. Just as we turned over to indulge in "forty winks" more, we were jerked wide awake by the *unwelcome* clangor of the breakfast bell!

Our collective impressions of the usual before-breakfast stroll on deck that morning seem very indistinct. The Chronicler's notes indicate our mood of sleepy irritation and lack of interest in the new day. The entry in my note-book which now lies before me on my study table, states baldly, with comic incoherence:

"Ripley, Ohio—drums—steamer 'Luke McLuke'—creeping through thinning fog."

Now, why Ripley, Ohio, should be moved to drum the poor steamer "Luke McLuke" (such a name is surely joke enough on *one* boat!) out into, and through a thinning fog, does not clearly appear. However, by determinedly digging down into his subconscious memory, the Chronicler has pieced together and elaborated upon that bald entry in this wise:

The fog thinned enough at six A.M. for the "Bustling Billy" to pull herself along the shoreline in a sort of hand-over-hand fashion, until by seven-thirty the mist lifted and she found herself near a little warehouse dock at Ripley, Ohio. From this dock the darkies had rolled "drums" of some chemical on board. Then a hoarse, booming siren-whistle, giving off short roars with



## ON THE OHIO

apprehensive frequency, had approached closer and closer, until a ghostly line of empty barges came into view from out of the thicker fog of mid-river. The powerful boat that was pushing them was the "Luke McLuke" and it had passed us as we went below to breakfast. We had smiled grimly at her name—made that bare note of it—went on to our morning meal—and forgot to amplify further.

By ten o'clock the air was warm and bright with sunshine, and the landscape rich with autumn reds. These wrought their beneficent influence upon us, and life looked much more worth the living than it had earlier in the morning.

Some of the very longest coal trains in the world are to be seen on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway, which at this point runs along the Kentucky bank.

"This railroad is one of Collis P. Huntington's realized dreams," said the Pathfinder, turning to the Painter Man.

"Oh, is that so?—why, I thought old Collis P. was a California product, solely."

"No; and just such need on our part for information about the less known parts of the national domain made me plan this trip. Californians know New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna and Rome; but what do they know of the historical *America*—the *unusual* America—that



A COAL CHUTE ON THE OHIO



## 'A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

lies—two-thirds of a whole great continent of it—beyond our own State's great eastern wall—the snow-capped Sierra Nevadas!"

The wooded hills on the Kentucky shore were much higher here and the pretty valleys in between were deeper. At the mouth of one of these stream valleys, we found Maysville, Kentucky. Our boat made a landing here and remained long enough for the Captain to remind us that this was the little town where the famous trial of the Kentucky feud murderers was held. We could see the courthouse quite plainly and even get a glimpse of the courtyard from which the Governor was shot from ambush.

At Maysville there is a steep, wall-crowned bank, lined with a row of tall brick houses. And such fascinating dormer windows peep from the steep-pitched roofs! The frames and panes must have been brought from French New Orleans;—they were high, slender and very artistically arched.

By early afternoon we were passing miles of tobacco-fields. They were planted on the steep slopes that now appeared on the Ohio side. The fields were rather startling with their ribbon-like belts of brown and green. This difference in colours was caused by the tobacco being planted near bordering bands of old brown pastures and rows of rusty-looking corn fodder. The tobacco-

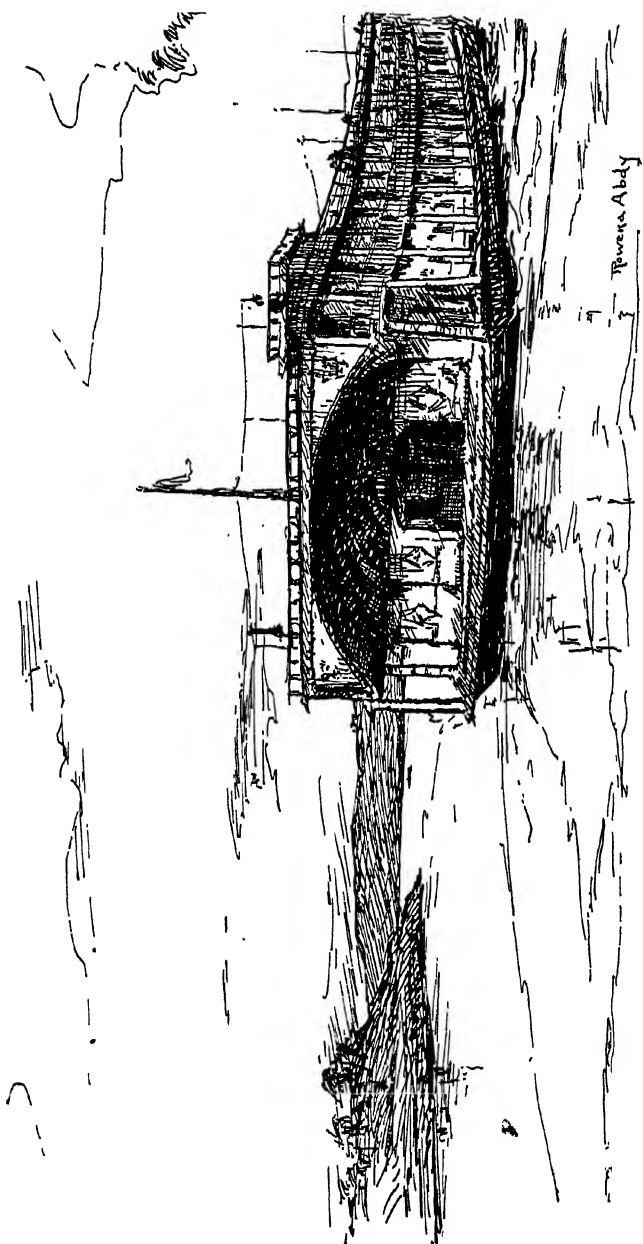
## ON THE OHIO

planted slopes finally stopped at a wall of impressive cliffs that were plainly copying a bit of New York "style"—the famous Palisades of the Hudson.

In the middle of the now quite warm afternoon, we were somewhat startled on hearing two peculiarly shrill blasts from some craft in mid-river. We hurried over to that side of our boat. We were all eager interest the moment we saw the strange "outfit," as we say in the Far West. It was a floating river-theatre—a "movie" house being towed by a smart little gasoline tug to "play" another town. It was one of several theatres, we learned, that, built on great barges, are towed up and down the Ohio to small towns and landings which cannot afford the luxury of an "opera" house. Churches, too, we heard later, are towed about in the same way.

At nightfall, passing Rome, Ohio, we remember seeing a very fine old brick house not far from the bank. There was a look of other days about it—an air of being lived in and cared for by some descendant of the pioneer aristocrat who built it.

Just before supper we caught the steward on deck and asked him if we could not have some stateroom away from the nocturnal noises of the boat. He was all sincere concern at once, and said he would change us to "most any place



A "MOVIE" THEATRE *moving up* THE RIVER



## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

you-all want, sah, but the best way is for me to warn the 'night watch' to make less fuss."

He apologized for the men, saying:

"Dey didn't do it to be mean, sah—dey'se jes ignorant an' thoughtless—most of 'em air jes levee and freight-boat rousters,—not used to passenger packets. The boat, der cap'n and the whole crew of us is jest a-subbin' (substituting) on *dis* trip."

The steward evidently admonished the crew as to their conduct on a "passenger packet," for we were not disturbed that night; although the fog put the "Bustling Billy" to sleep as early as eleven o'clock.

After supper the Captain offered to show us the freight deck and engine-room. During our tour we were shown the "jingle,"—a little bell near the engineer's head,—which, though light in tone, everybody hears night or day. This is the same bell that the pilot rings from so far above. We saw, while down there, that our stateroom was right over a warm loafing-place near the boilers, a fact which accounted for the "watch" spending their leisure there at night.

A passing tow "tooted" just then in so personal a tone that the Captain stepped to the side and, looking over towards a receding cluster of glowing lights, remarked:



## ON THE OHIO

"I reckon that's Captain Mark Brown, bound down to Cairo with the old 'Marlen Riggs'."

We now started to go and were thanking the Captain for his courtesy, but he, putting a fresh charge in his pipe, demurred:

"Shucks, the night's young yet—besides, we're goin' to make a 'shore' landing (as distinguished from a 'wharfboat' one) pretty soon. It's a tough place—mighty steep bank—got to use the big stage and be spry about everything. Wait."

We did. It was a very difficult landing. The "substitute" crew were not familiar with it, so the Captain had arranged to be there to assist the mate, if needed. The men,—nondescript though they were, seemed willing. Even the slowest and ungainliest one *tried* to be "peart," when sharply ordered to by the vigilant old mate. The poor fellow lacked "steam" and "know-hòw" as the river language has it, so, after the man had made a very slow return down the steep stage, the mate bawled out at him:

"Lawd Gawd, 'Christmus,' it takes you-all as long to make a round trip as it took Grant to take Richmond!"

Poor "Christmas" spurted up a bit, but he had not the necessary staying power. "What a funny name — 'Christmas,'" whispered the Painter Lady.

The mate turned, grinned and said:

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

"Yes, mum, 'cause he is as slow a-comin' as Christmas."

"Then *you* named him that?"

"Yes, mum; but you should hear the fool names this gang o' rousters tack onto *each other*."

"Yes," laughed the Captain, taking his pipe out of his mouth;—then, using the pipe as a pointer, continued:

"That black one there is 'Blossom'; that yellow lad over there is 'Chocolate'; that 'tough' with the razor scar along his cheek is 'Pittsburg.' 'Maje' there—he's my old reliable—is 'Preacher,' and that hatchet-faced one is just plain 'Whiskey.'

The jolly Captain of the "Bustling Billy" seemed to be something of a "night hawk" in his choice of time for pleasure. He blithely suggested, after his steamer cast off from the "shore" landing, that we join him in a bowl of hot coffee and then go on deck; because the river scenery would be unusually interesting during the next hour's run. He said he was going to take the wheel himself at certain points, because his pilot was "just a 'cub,'" and the navigation "kinda ticklish, the river being pretty crooked in places." We wanted to reach a certain island above Portsmouth, too, before the fog came on, as there was a snug little berth there to tie up in.

We accepted the invitation. The coffee, steam-

## ON THE OHIO

ing hot, was served in a bowl—an *over*-“flowing bowl,” at that—and its effect was to cheer and stimulate us into singing some simple little songs, as we snuggled, all warm and cosy, under the lee of the pilot-house.

We were placed close to a window, so that the Captain could chat with us now and then. This he did, exchanging jokes, information and rough, kindly philosophy in return for *our* word-pictures of life on the Atlantic and of river scenes in Europe. He told us, among other things, that he had intended to point out the birthplace of General U. S. Grant, when we passed it,—Point Pleasant, Ohio,—the first evening out of Cincinnati.

Though it was a moonless night, there was a clear, starlit sky. Outlined against it, ran a bold line of hills—the highest and most pointed peaks that we had seen along the river. These highlands pushed out so far into the broad, smooth waters, that they seemed to be threatening to stop our further progress. Like the river, our steamer had to bend and twist and dodge in quick succession in order to squeeze through the now-constricted channel. As if compelled to stop for breath, because of these contortions, the “Bustling Billy” puffed exhaustedly up to a rather dark and deserted-looking landing (shortly after half-past ten). The landing was on the Ohio side and, as

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

we could dimly see, had the usual high, rock-paved bank, topped by a strong stone wall. Behind the latter the town lay hidden, and had apparently gone to sleep. Only a few scattered arc lights showed among the trees that swayed, in the cold night breeze, above the wall; so we said, "Good-night, Dark Landing," and turned to go below.

As we did so, a subdued "toot" and a modest toned bell arrested our attention. We returned to the rail in time to see that what before had seemed to us to be a dimly lighted ferryboat tied up for the night was now all alive with glowing lights. Like Joseph's coat, they were of many colours. This boat now began to back out into the river and we crossed to the other side of ours to see where it would go.

We have always been glad we did so—always been grateful because the sleepy little ferry made one more trip that night. For, on the other side of the river, we saw quite a Fairy Village! The hamlet reclined, so to say, on the high, deep bulk of a wooded hill, which rose far up and out of sight in quick, short terraces. The place was a very poem of soft lights, that peeped shyly through a screen of trees bordering the shady lanes.

The old ferryboat, small in size and odd in design, splashed quietly across the night-stilled river. Her paddle-boxes and upper works took

## ON THE OHIO

on a curious, shadow-like bulkiness, as she reached mid-stream; but all about her lower works there glowed a delightfully soft-toned radiance. Down there, the cabin lights cunningly coaxed orange-hued reflections from the red-brown water, while dull-glowing side lights of red and green made colourful accents for the whole. With the arrival of the ferry at the wharf of the Fairy Village, the scene fell into an artistically proportioned "composition"—an exquisite, gem-like "nocturne."

When we went on deck at seven-thirty next morning, our boat was approaching a great smoky blast-furnace on the river bend at Ashland, Kentucky. Looking up and through the unappetizing murk of smoke, sulphured fumes and fog, it came upon us that we had finally left behind the more rural regions of the Ohio. Henceforth its chief note would be industrial.

We were to stop at Ashland for an hour, so the Captain told us it would be a good chance to go ashore and buy a new demijohn of filtered water; like the one he had advised us to get before coming on board at Cincinnati.

"If you-all had got to Evansville two weeks before you did, you could have travelled all the way to Pittsburg on the 'Joe Fowler'; she's sure some smart packet;—she carries filtered water and everything," remarked the Captain, as we returned with our bulgy bottle.

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

The Pathfinder told him that the "Joe Fowler" had been included "in our plans" before leaving San Francisco, and explained to him also why we were behind our schedule.

By midday, we were at Catlettsburg, Kentucky, and it was here that at last "the old Kentucky shore" refused to follow us further. The little town is on a rounded ridge above the mouth of the Big Sandy, the partly navigable little river that divides Kentucky from West Virginia.

When our boat was in mid-stream at this point, we stood at the bow and looked at *three* States—Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky.

Catlettsburg is the "last chance" at a saloon town for those going up-river,—West Virginia being "dry," and roustabouts have dubbed the saloon-ridden little town "Whiskey Run." The wharfboat there so much resembled the Biblical ark that we Californians immediately christened the town's rounded hillock "Mount Ararat!"

We had just snapped a picture of the Painter Man in a comical pose, when a coal-black deck-hand, cap in hand, approached us. He begged, with all the smiling, wheedling confidence of a child, that we take *his* picture, too. He was irresistible; so we told him to "stand *still*," which he did with a ramrod-like stiffness that ill-comported with his broad, thick-lipped grin—his rags, and sleeveless undershirt. We afterwards sent

## ON THE OHIO

him a print of the "horror" in accordance with the promise he had managed to coax out of us. He, by the way, was "Blossom," and, it transpired, a bridegroom of but a week or two. His companions were bantering him unmercifully as he stood there in the pose, and one called out to us:

"Doan't take his pitchur, White Folks,—he's gwine ter give it to his ole gal in Evansville—an' he jes' dun got a *new* wife in Cincinnati."

A general laugh greeted this sally, but the recent benedict, evidently clear as to conscience and happy in being photographed, called back over his shoulder rather cleverly, "O-oh law, Ah reckon Ah'se dun got as much right ter starve a woman to death as any other pore niggah."

Just above the Big Sandy the Virginia hills flatten out quite noticeably, but sandstone crags and palisades run wall-like along the Ohio side. At Huntington, ten miles above the Sandy, the hills come back, and the river, which has widened a wee bit, now narrows again. These "narrows" are being utilized by the Government in establishing a unit of its lock system. It is at Huntington, too, that the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway comes up from its seaboard levels on Chesapeake Bay and reaches the river, thereby earning its right to the "Ohio" part of its name.

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

Shortly before we came in sight of the lock and dam work, we saw our first rain on the river. It was a new "effect" for us, so we sought shelter under a lifeboat and remained on deck. The sweeps, runs and "catspaws" of hurrying wind and slanting shower on the rain-blobbed surface of the stream were intensely interesting. One of the pilots going "on watch," came smiling towards us and queried: "Looking at the rain-effect on the river? Pretty, isn't it?"

Presently, he confessed, rather shyly, that he had studied art in Cincinnati for a few months, but had been compelled to "get out and make a living in some other way"; and had given up painting and studied for a pilot's license instead.

Some miles farther up the river, we saw ahead of us a strange fog-formation that came as a result of the rain. Floating, almost motionless, over the surface of the river, and rarely rising more than a hundred feet above, it appeared in separated blocks of milky whiteness. This phenomenon caused much speculation on board: "Was it going to thicken and keep us away from our destination that night?"

As we passed into each bank of fog, we would exclaim in mild despair: "We will *surely* be fog-bound *this* time!" But the mist was only playing with us; for after a mile or two of it, all became clear and bright again.



## ON THE OHIO

By five-thirty we were at Gallipolis (Gally-polee), an old French settlement. There we had hoped for at least time enough to run up to the top of the bank and get a few minutes' peep at the place. But there were only half a dozen pieces of freight to be set ashore, and none to come aboard; so we did not even get beyond the wharf-boat shed before we were called back and warned to stay "close by," as the boat would leave "directly."

From the upper deck we got a tantalizing glimpse of a row of old houses, shade trees and street lamps. Gallipolis would, no doubt, supply material for an artist. It has all those indications, anyway, from the river. Also it has quite a time-mellowed history for a background.

We had almost given up the hope of dining in Point Pleasant, Virginia, that evening, for the "Bustling Billy" was an hour late, but there being no freight to take on at Gallipolis, the captain "cast off" without further delay and started to "crowd her a little," as he expressed it. He wanted to catch up on his schedule, and also to land us at our destination in time for dinner.

In this he succeeded. By his ordering our baggage down and all ready on the gang-plank, and by hailing the hotel porter on the wharf, before the boat even touched it, he was able to

## A TWO-DAYS' VOYAGE

keep his promise. But only *just*—for we entered the dining-room through only *half* its doorway;—the smiling black headwaiter having already closed the other half.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Point Pleasant*

Point Pleasant, West Virginia: a Winter Harbour—A Battlefield of the Revolutionary Period.

AT Point Pleasant we were made to realize that, slow as our river progress had been, we were still making steady “eastings” of it; for here, two hundred and four miles above Cincinnati, we took on Eastern time,—setting our watches an hour ahead. That was the official thing to do on arriving at this point—take on or take off an hour, according to whether one were going east or west.

At noon next day we were notified that our Pittsburg boat was delayed by fog, and would be twenty-four hours late. This pleased us; for we had already seen that Point Pleasant was another “find.” The place had something of Smithland’s charm; for, although it was larger by a thousand or so, and on a railroad, it was delightfully unspoiled for an artist, or a student of the river’s Passing Time.

The “Point” is pleasant,—a pleasant, soot-free little oasis, doubly welcome to our eyes after,

## POINT PLEASANT

passing through the more industrial districts below. Here the Great Kanawha (pronounced, locally, something like "K'noy"), flowing in from the south, enters the Ohio at almost a right angle. With the aid of locks and dams this important tributary is made navigable for almost ninety miles. An enormous—and some say the largest—amount of the coal cargoes going down the lower Ohio come out of the coalfields of the Kanawha.

The smaller river, seen near its junction with the larger one, is modestly picturesque; being narrower than the Ohio, it has that subtle charm of being intimate, too. The deep still water at its mouth widens into quite a lake-like body and is used as the winter harbour for this portion of the Ohio. Many of the "crack" packets used during the summer excursion trade—and also the floating theatres and churches—are lined up snugly along the banks and behind stone ice-breakers. These wintering craft add to old Point Pleasant a feature decidedly unique; for her "quiet" season is quite her gayest!

The town—the pioneer town—was built in clusters about the beautifully triangular point of land at whose apex the waters of the two historic streams peacefully co-mingle.

It is truly a "noble prospect" from the gravel bluffs above the meeting-place of those two

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rivers! Here the Ohio in stately volume rolls in from the right; at the left behold the gentler Kanawha, an unpretentious but a very worthy maid-of-honour to the tawny Queen of Waters awaiting her outside. Joined, they swing off, arm-in-arm, as it were, into a long, slightly curving course towards the northwest; where, checked by a high-wooded ridge, they swerve sharply to the right and are lost to view. Surely, in summer time, there must be some wonderful sunsets seen from here!

That point—let us call it Point Confluence—is at once the beginning, the centre and the end of things historical in this pleasant little Sentry City which guards the mouth of the Kanawha.

By simply turning on one's heel—away from the view down-river,—one sees, two blocks away, a sudden stoppage of the city's buildings, as they near the open spaces of what might be called "Battlefield Park." There they stand; stiff, solid, and drawn up in line like soldiers at the command of "Halt!" And "halt" they should; for beneath that piece of parkland are heroes buried. There, on that wild but immensely strategic point of the *then* Farthest Frontier, was fought the *first* battle of what proved to be the War of Independence. Not at Lexington,—mark you, student of to-day, but on the Ohio—at the mouth of the Kanawha; even as the *last* battle

## POINT PLEASANT

of the Revolution was fought on the banks of the York, at Yorktown. For at the confluence of the Kanawha the colonists were led by General Lewis, an *intrepid* Virginian, while at Yorktown they fought under that other and greater Virginian—General George Washington!

The battle on the Ohio was contested in the early days of October, 1774. The Indians were of allied tribes and led by Cornstalk, the very able chief of the Shawnees.

In the centre of the battlefield rises the lofty shaft of the Battle Monument; while nearby, on the edge of the Ohio's bluff, stands an ancient two-story house of logs. The old dwelling is now the Chapter House of the Colonel Charles Lewis Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. It is also the official museum for the battle relics and other curios of the Revolutionary period. The old structure is in an excellent state of preservation, although it has now stood in three centuries.

Several well-carven figures in Colonial regimentals adorn the pedestal. Below, the names of those who fought on that memorable field are carved in the enduring granite. In addition, there are some well-chosen words treating of the historic import of the battle. We saw some other lines, too,—stirring lines having a tender undertone which mark the monument as being unusual.

## ON THE OHIO

Also, in the tree-shaded courthouse square is a modest limestone shaft, inscribed with one word:

### CORNSTALK

Looking up the Kanawha from the Point, one sees a gleaming length of pleasant river. It passes under the shapely railway bridge, and just beyond stops abruptly at a dam over which roars a fall of sunlit water. This forms the first of the series of locks and dams that are needed to restrain the rather eager current and make it navigable.

On the banks below the bridge are busy ship-yards, and from them come the not unpleasant rasping hum of greedy saws and the crescendo droning of planing mills. On the opposite side of the Kanawha appeared the roofs of a little village amongst the trees. Along the shore were moored craft of various kinds; for the summer boats were seeking their winter quarters. A large river-theatre had already arrived. She was a sort of gaily painted Noah's Ark, with a concaved façade of gorgeous papier-mâché highly ornamented by means of brain-dizzying arabesques, evidently in keeping with all the best traditions of the modern "movie" theatre front! A tiny ferry-boat, with a cheerful, chirpy sort of whistle, slapped itself to and fro across the stream with a flappy little stern wheel.

Point Pleasant, though dating its permanent

## POINT PLEASANT

settlement from A.D. 1785, has apparently no architectural relic of those early days, save the Chapter House already referred to. Many quaint old houses abound, however; for the town is a county seat. This implies that it was, and probably is yet, the centre of the country's social, professional and cultural life. Being a county seat sets certain standards of living for a town, of which the housing of the dignitaries of the Law, Laity and Church is a most important one.

After lunch one day the Pathfinder planned a bit of playtime. He "chartered" for a thrilling (?) voyage of a mile or so up to the Kanawha dam a home-made, one-crew, little stern-wheeler. She was satisfactory in every way except for the second letter of her name,—which was "R-o-c-k-e-t,"—and that letter should have been "a" instead of "o."

The "captain, mate and bo-sun tight" of the "Little Flapper," as we named her, was a decent young fellow, who grinned in evident enjoyment of our quips and jests anent his noisy boat. He was glad, seemingly, to turn the steering over to the Painter Man, whose hands "itched" to grasp the spokes of the "Rocket's" wheel. The "captain" went below—perchance to fatten on the unctuous smells or to dally with the engine—while the Pathfinder went forward to photograph the shore.



## ON THE OHIO

"Happy?" he called out to the steersman.

"Would be—perfectly—if I could only light my pipe."

"All right," responded the other as he slipped in another roll of film. "All right, I hereby promote your passenger (the Painter Lady was in the pilot-house) to the rank of quartermaster—give her the wheel—and—er—a few instructions."

With a mock salute, she seized the spokes and, presently, steered like a veteran. Soon she was laughing delightedly at the thrill of the new experience.

"Cease that levity in the pilot-house!" the Pathfinder-captain roared in his hoarsest sou'-sou'-wester voice. His order was received with mutinous looks and words. Blind, with a *towering* deep-sea rage, he levelled at their heads a—pocket camera—and shot!—the damning evidence of their rebellious grimaces being thus recorded for future proof! The quartermaster's fate (having been ordered into irons) sobered the other mutineer—another "snapshot" proving his change of expression; so he sought solace in his pipe.

The blood from the carnage was now washed into the ever-ready "lee scuppers," and the "Rocket" squared away—homeward-bound! Like those lazy little donkeys that one has to "whack-whack" all the way on an *outward* journey,

## POINT PLEASANT

but who trot back briskly stableward, without urging, our little craft hurried back to port. In fact, the "Rocket" kicked up such a "racket" with her engines, whistles, bells and skipperly, slap-slap paddles—

That, from the shore,  
The little echoes came out to see  
The cause of all this minstrelsy!

By standing at the foot of the stone-paved little street which pitches sharply to the landing, one gets a glimpse—but only just a glimpse—of some pleasant old homes. They are partly hidden by tall, sheltering trees that swing and brush, with the easy familiarity of old friends, 'gainst porch and door and lattice. But the delightful hedge-bordered gardens, however, are plainly visible, for they run out to the edge of the steep and rather pretty bank. Here many an inviting rustic seat has been set down; from these quiet places the view of passing steamers, the Ohio ferry and the high railway bridge a few blocks above must be always interesting.

It was just at the base of this bench-lined bank that we espied a magnificent excursion steamer being prepared for her winter berth in the Kanawha harbour, just around the corner. The chief engineer lived in one of the old houses, and a zigzag path led down from his garden gate, right to the gang-plank of his beloved boat.

## ON THE OHIO

He was very proud of her; for was she not the Queen of the Ohio—the “Homer Smith”? The “Homer” was a floating “Coney Island.” Every modern convenience and the last word in amusement features could be found on board her; decks seemed to be stacked upon decks;—in fact, she floats so high above the water that she cannot pass under certain bridges during even a medium stage of high water. A great bell is one of her proudest possessions; for in addition to having a splendid tone, it also has an eventful history. It once belonged to the famous steamboat “Morning Star,” back in 1878; then, somehow, it was lost track of. For years steamboat men along the three great rivers kept their ears acock for its unusual tone. One day, it was heard offshore at Louisville and traced to a belfry—above a fertilizer factory!

“Where’d you get that bell?” the “river sleuth” breathlessly demanded of the factory man.

“Bought it in a junk yard down in Memphis,” drawled the owner, with an amused smile and a stifled yawn. “Why?”

“Well, I’d like to buy it,—it’s a steamboat bell and it ain’t decent to have such a bell on a factory—and a fertilizer factory at that!”

“All right, give me two hundred dollars and take the bell down yourself;—it took half the

## POINT PLEASANT

riggers in Louisville to get it up there; so you'll have some little old job on your hands to get it down again."

"I'll tackle it all right—here's half your money, —I'll be back with the balance and a gang of men to-morrow."

The "Homer Smith's" steam calliope is another treasured possession. On excursion trips the strident staccato of its bombastic notes are blared from its giant pipes to herald the steamer's approach to the waiting crowds at the landings.

This really splendid vessel takes several hundreds of passengers from Pittsburg alone, when she makes her annual run from there to the Mardi Gras festivities at New Orleans. A gay and goodly company of a thousand or so are usually on board by the time she reaches the Creole City. A month is occupied on the round trip. Now and then, however, there comes a February in which the ice in the upper Ohio is too thick for safety and the trip is not attempted.

Strolling along the water's edge below the wharfboat for a hundred feet or so, we found the ferry landing. Here people pass back and forth between Ohio and West Virginia. Travel across the river is not heavy, however; for the railroads have superseded the old post routes, for the convenience of which the ferry, no doubt, was established in days gone by.

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The famous old boat "Ann Bailey" did the ferrying and the broad-beamed old "carry-all" seemed as safe as an ox-wagon and just about as slow. But "Ann," I'm afraid, was a gay old boat withal—she painted,—painted on both her paddle boxes a portrait bust of that other Ann for whom she was named.

But we must, at least, outline the story of Ann—the heroine, at once the most picturesque and romantic figure of the Kanawha country in pre-Revolutionary days. The facts, obtained from local historians, were about as follows:

Ann was British-born—a native of Liverpool. Her father had fought under the Duke of Marlborough at Blenheim. Our leading character came into the world as Ann Hennis about the middle of the seventeen hundreds. At twenty she was orphaned and emigrated to Virginia, where she had relatives, the Bells. She married four years later and her husband, Samuel Trotter, was killed at the Battle of Point Pleasant. From that time on she dreamed and planned for revenge. Placing her little son with a kinswoman, she dressed in the male costume of the Border and attended drills and musters until she learned all the tricks of Indian warfare. She became famous as a scout and messenger. Later, she married John Bailey, a man who had fought by the side of her first husband.

## POINT PLEASANT

Ann Bailey was already forty when she won lasting fame by her mad ride of one hundred miles through a country infested with Indians, in order to get powder for the besieged garrison at Fort Lee on the Kanawha, now Charleston, West Virginia. By that exploit she became known as "Mad Ann Bailey"—a sort of "Mad Anthony Wayne" of the West.

At the dedication of the battle monument, the heroine's remains were removed from her grave in Ohio—just across the river—and very fitly placed with the gallant dead who fell on that historic field.

When passing by the park next day on our way to sketch, we saw excavations in progress. It proved to be a systematized search for battle relics, and was in charge of a Federal expert. He was an earnest and interesting young man, and, like "Tom Sawyer," let us "play" while doing his work of sorting over the piles of dirt. Using the steel-pointed legs of his easel, the Painter Man raked and scratched through the gravel most mightily! The Painter Lady used the sharp wooden end of her paint brush until she unearthed a portion of a "grinning skull," whereupon, with a shudder of dismay, she ceased her digging. Broken rifle stocks, spear and arrow heads, military buttons and bits of British pottery rewarded our efforts. We had quite a unique

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and delightful half-hour's "work" of relic hunting, and our "pay" was some trifles that were given to us—trifles of no value for museum purposes.

The official also showed us the Government's survey mark that records the local elevation above sea-level; viz., 570 ft. This made us realize the amount of "downhill" that the coal tows of the Kanawha had to make to get to New Orleans, and also the height of the "uphill" they had to climb to get back again with their "empties."

Commercial travellers, when speaking of Point Pleasant as a place for business, will tell you that it is "dead,—killed by Prohibition!"

The air of spaciousness and former splendour about our rather deserted and decaying hotel certainly bespoke a busy and prosperous past—a past which we learned was quite a recent one.

*National Prohibition!—National Drunkenness!*

What will be the final adjustment? Surely neither one nor the other!—for Truth, Sane Living lie in between.

After Prohibition once wins a nation-wide decision, *it*, in the magnanimity of victory, may be led to see the Sanity of Balance, and the thoroughly vanquished Vampire of Unrestricted Intemperance be also shown the way of Moderation and Restraint.

## CHAPTER X

### *Point Pleasant to Marietta*

Point Pleasant to Marietta, the Mother-port of the Ohio—Roustabout Nicknames for Steamboats—Blennerhassett, Where Burr and Hamilton Duelled—Our Steamer Climbs a Dam.

WE were to leave the old capital of the Kanawha at seven, the night of the 20th of October. We hurried through packing—we hurried through dinner—and we hurried through the street to the chilly landing, only to realize, some hours later, that we had simply hurried ourselves into an agony of fretful *waiting!*

Our boat was shockingly, despairingly late! It was fully ten-thirty before she swung into view from around "Point Confluence" and sort of stormed up to the wharfboat in a blaze of lights and a smother of smoke. She was in a deuce of a temper, too; for she kept whistling in short, savage blasts all the way up to the landing.

Everybody on board was in a sullen mood, and the poor crew were simply worn out trying to catch up with the schedule. Try as they might, they never succeeded, not even when to save time at a lock the steamer boldly *climbed over* the



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breast of a dam. They did not catch up in our whole, long, five days' voyage to Pittsburg!

"D'ye reckon ye'll hev to tie up f' fog ter-night, Mister Mate?" asked an amiable backwoodsman, as the mate was having the freight rushed aboard. Explodingly he answered:

"Say, friend," he roared, "*I reckon* she will; but believe *me*, *I* don't care if the fog shuts down so d——d tight that the 'Bobbie Dunne' has to 'go to sleep' until the middle of next week. We're all plumb wore out!"

And the fog did shut down, with such a sudden, blinding swoop, too, that the boat scarcely had time to grope her way to the safety of the bank and hold tight to it, like a frightened cat escaping from a yapping dog.

Yes, we had steamed but a few miles from our starting-point when the "Bobbie" had to put on its little nightcap and go to sleep. Poor "Bobbie's" run was too long, anyway. It stretched from Charleston, far up on the Kanawha to Pittsburg, nearly three hundred and fifty miles.

Morning came and thinned the fog a little. About an hour before breakfast, it had lifted somewhat; so, very slowly, the boat, whistling frequently, scraped and scratched its way along the bank for safety's sake. Our steamer only drew twenty-two inches of water when fully loaded;

## POINT PLEASANT TO MARIETTA

but twenty inches being all she needed now, she kept so close to the shore that we seemed to be running more through willows than through water. For the moment she pretended to be a land craft; sliding through swishing branches and waving grass, but the bumpless motion clearly betrayed that water bore her, after all.

The bushes, heavily wet with the fog-dews of the night, whipped and slashed, on the landward side, from stem to stern. One slender branch, broken on its impact with the bow, very neatly picked off the ragged cap of a boyish darky who was snatching playfully at the passing brush. Instantly, a dozen kinky heads were stuck out to laugh at the purloined cap which now on the triumphant branch, was fast receding astern.

The fog cleared shortly after we had finished our morning meal, and we went on deck. We found that our boat was creeping into Pomeroy, Ohio. We made a landing there, and who should come on deck to watch the boat "make fast" but our old friend, Daddy Twain! He came towards our group—came smiling with that happy, mellow manner of healthy and sane old age, which seems to find itself enjoying a spiritual sort of Second Youth.

"Mighty glad we are goin' to travel together again, folks!" he exclaimed heartily,—giving each of us a vigorous handshake. "I was up to

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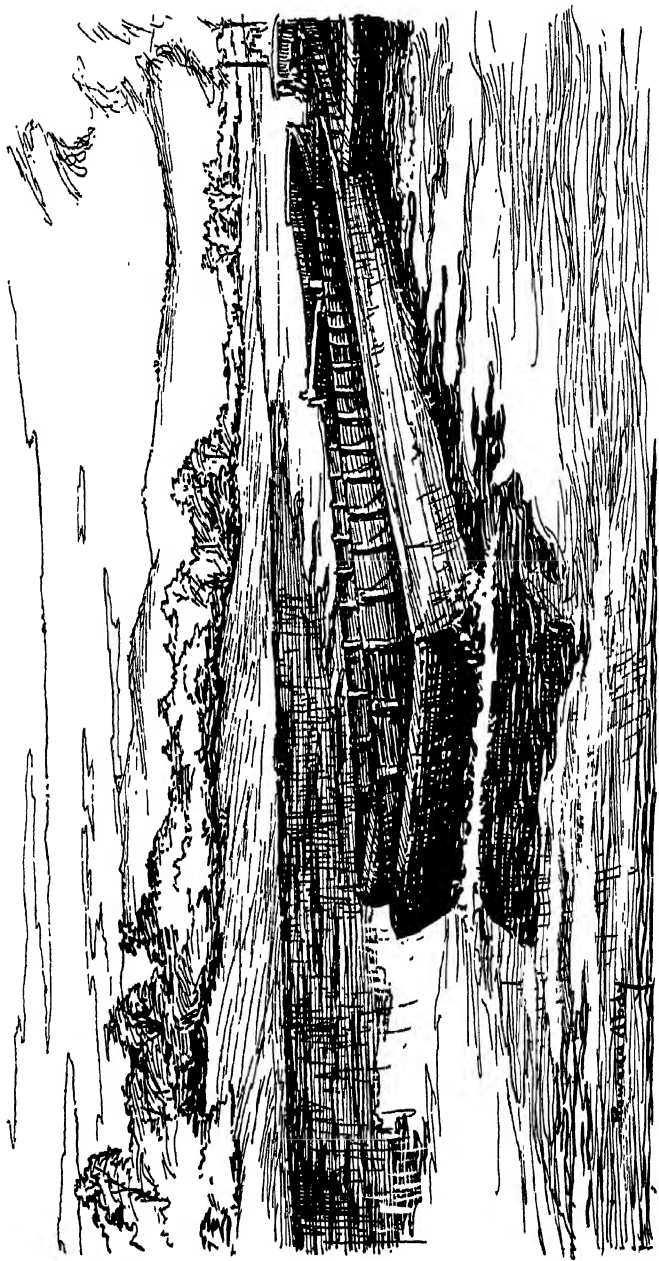
Charleston, lookin' up some of my old friends; now, I'm goin' to the top o' the hill (Pittsburg), so we'll likely be together four or five days—mebbe more, if these plagawn'd fogs keep up."

The names of places on and near the river always interested us; for thus we could, by interesting speculation and deduction, arrive at some idea of the origin of the settlers who named them.

The Pathfinder's boyhood was spent in a little Pennsylvania town, that supported one whole suburb, by name "Ewington." Accordingly, when he heard of a little town just above Point Pleasant named "Ewington," too, he wondered which was the older,—his or this more western one. Moreover, there was, six miles from the place, a town of Harrisburg. The Pathfinder's Ewington in Pennsylvania had a Harrisburg for a neighbour town, too—and only *three* miles away! Coincidence?—or former Pennsylvanians as founders? Which?

While on the subject of the Pathfinder's home towns, it may be interesting to mention that Harris's Ferry, the original name of Harrisburg, is also duplicated on the banks of the Ohio. Harris's Ferry, West Virginia, being but some sixty miles up river from this western Harrisburg and Ewington.

Pomeroy, too, was interesting as a name; for we were reminded of its French origin: "Pomme-



BLACK BETSY



## POINT PLEASANT TO MARIETTA

de-roi"—Apple of the King. It seems a sudden jump from king's apples to salt wells and empty coal-tows, but we make it in order to give the "local colour" at Pomeroy. *Salt* is produced there, as in Michigan, from wells. The *tow* was being pushed by the huge "Tom Dodsworth" (since wrecked by a boiler explosion), and one member of "Tom's" tow,—or barge-harem,—was named "Black Betsy"—very appropriately, too, we thought after looking down into her coal-dusty hold!

We were now nearly two miles beyond the landing of the little town; but there still ran after us, along the top of the bank, an irregular line of small frame houses; evidently they considered themselves constituent parts of the "free port" of Pomeroy,—foolish though it seemed to us.

Amused, we questioned the old pilot, who grinned and said that the river-men "swore up an' down that Pomeroy was nothing but a string bean and twelve miles long at that."

We would have enjoyed going ashore at the next landing—Antiquity, Ohio; for the cliffs that overhang the village are said to have been rudely sculptured by some ancient race. Antiquarians often visit there for research purposes.

Above Antiquity, a smooth-topped hill, having one or two distant terraces, comes into view. It stands at the bottom of a long, tortuous bend that

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literally writhes across the region between Point Pleasant and Parkersburg.

The Painter Man remarked that the bare, grassy eminence reminded him of the rounded hill-islands that beautify San Francisco Bay. But the Pathfinder scarcely heard him; for he was trying to read, mentally, the paragraph which that hill had written into the local chapter of geography.

“That hill is at the bottom—or rather the top—of all this big bend trouble that the river has here. See,” and he spread out his map of the region—“see, Mother Ohio in her romping girlhood was shaping a fairly straight course southwest from Parkersburg to Pomeroy, some eighty miles below. But up stood this lump of a hill blocking her course like a loutish lad; she swerved with a frightened swing due south, then west, then north, until the poor startled thing arrived safely at her objective—Pomeroy. . . . Talk about dodging U-boats, she had to make a ‘U’ to dodge into.”

When we had steamed for all of an hour from Pomeroy to the bottom of that U, we were only about ten miles or so 'cross country from Point Pleasant, our starting-place of the night before! So, too, when our boat reached the top of the right perpendicular on that same U, we were only twelve miles from Pomeroy—and *that* after several hours of steady steaming!

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“Some” bend!

The river was now rising again, and there was some talk around the decks of our “climbing the dam” at Belleville, if there were boats ahead of us waiting for the lock.

We sought out Daddy Twain, and asked to be enlightened. He said that clever pilots, with steady nerves and backed by good engines, will sometimes dash like a salmon at the smooth slope of water racing over a flood-submerged dam, and then doggedly forge ahead, right over it. This saves time and adds a spice of danger.

Being so far behind his schedule, the Captain had decided to climb the dam, in case the “rise” had covered it with a sufficient depth of water. As we approached the dam, the crew were put to work tightening up the iron rods that braced the upper works of the boat against vibration and cargo strain. When we reached the locks, three steamers were ahead of us—that settled it! *We were* to go *over* the dam! Evidently a thrill awaited us, as the Painter Lady expressed it.

A megaphoned colloquy now ensued between the lock tender and our captain about the depth of water running over the wickets—as the dam is sometimes called.

“That’s fine—we’ll take a run at it . . . got plenty o’ water!” exclaimed the skipper, setting down his speaking-tube.



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The "Bobbie" was now backed downstream by several lengths in order to get a good running start. By the time she hit the foot of the pitch, she was "shore hittin' it up!" as an excited darky exclaimed.

But by the time she had her full length up on that glassy slope of racing water, we could simply *feel* her whole fabric slow up, despite the quickened breathing of her deep-lunged engines. The "Still Presence" in the pilot-house was the Captain himself, with the pilot assisting at the other side of the great steering-wheel. When there came that portentous slowing-up, the Captain's lips moved, ever so slightly; whereupon the pilot called quietly down the tube to the engineer. Smoke now rolled out of the smokestacks in great black billows. By this time we were almost at a standstill. The lock wall over to our left seemed to be creeping stealthily towards us. The terrible side thrust of that sliding water was as subtle as it was sinister, in spite of its surface appearing so smooth.

Crew and passengers lined the rail in suppressed excitement. The lock attendants and the people on the other steamers, too, were all watching the "Bobbie Dunne" with a tense, unflagging interest. Despite the struggle and the strain of powerful engines, the curiously slow and deliberate "exhaust" sent out its odd-

## POINT PLEASANT TO MARIETTA

sounding "choo—uff-uf-uf—choo—uff-uf-uf," a calm, confident rhythm that forbade any unseemly excitement. No one spoke except in low, tense voices. The wheel had been "put over" a trifle, checking the side drift. Only by taking a "sight" of some fixed object on shore could it be seen that we still moved forward; this lasted a minute or so, and then we again felt a delicate something—a queer little vibration, and lo, our "sight" on the shore moved backward just a trifle faster!

Was "Bobbie's" cool, stubborn courage and strength actually going to win? Yes, for though we were in clear sunshine, the red tongues of flame that darted from the quivering smokestacks were plainly visible among the smoke—yes, the sweating firemen would see to that! Soon we became aware that the smoothness of the water was changing into ever-increasing wrinkles. Instinctively then we looked ahead.

"Oh, look at the ripples—the little waves, they are getting larger!" exclaimed the Painter Lady in a tense undertone.

"That's the breast of the dam, lady—once we get through that broken water, we are safe. I'm afear'd, though, she's a-goin' to side-slip again," replied the mate, who was standing near.

Save for the sound of the "exhaust," the next five minutes was a case of silent bulldog-like

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holding on to what we had; then once more came a touch to the wheel; once more the side drift was checked, and once more we felt the queer little slip-like vibration. During the next instant the broken water began to approach perceptibly faster. A few moments later we were passing through the curiously furrowed little waves that marked the crest of the dam, and the boat seemed fairly to leap ahead when she struck the slack-water a few yards beyond. Little "Bobbie" had won!

With three triumphant blasts of her whistle the plucky old freighter with her "head up in the air" was off on her way to Parkersburg, followed by generous compliments sent after her from the fog horns of the other boats.

Several miles farther on, we passed the mouth of the Hocking River. The Pathfinder recalled that there was a Little Hocking as well as a Big Hocking; this being one of those numerous cases along the Ohio that betrayed the curious propensity of the early explorers to name a "big" and a "little" river of the same name. Usually the "big" and the "little" rivers course through adjoining valleys; sometimes, however, the streams are really so absurdly far apart, that to dub them the "big" or "little" becomes a joke. This is the case with the Kanawhas; for the *Little* Kanawha is at Parkersburg, fully

## POINT PLEASANT TO MARIETTA

eighty miles up the river from the *Big Kanawha* at Point Pleasant.

The two Muskingums have only Marietta, Ohio between them, being scarcely three miles apart. The Hockings have five miles between them and the Sciotos—on each side of Portsmouth—are something of a joke, too; for all of seven miles separate *them*.

Another thing that is worthy of note is the fact that the “little” is always the *upstream* one! This would indicate that the first white men who explored the region hereabout journeyed *down* the Ohio, saw a stream, named it, went on a little farther, found a little larger one, and, lacking river-naming talent, simply tacked on the “big” to it and the “little” to the other—and let it go at that.

To extend this curious list of “little” and “big” somewhat further, one might mention the two Miamis. Cincinnati, Ohio (this State seems to be the greatest sufferer in this respect), has to keep the Miamis apart, having the “little” close under her left arm, as it were, while the “big” Miami is somewhat out of reach, being *twenty miles* downstream!

It was at the mouth of the Big Hocking that we saw our first “duck wings,” as the river-men refer to them. Probably it was the ferryboat between Harris’s Ferry and Hocking Port. Any-

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way, its peculiar style of marine architecture called for wide, shallow paddles on the side—a side-wheeler—and the effect *was* comically like a wild duck, with splashing outstretched wings, settling or rising on the water.

As we watched the little craft flap her way fussily into the landing, Daddy Twain joined us and began to tell the story of Blennerhassett Island. This, the most famous island of the Ohio, was but a few miles ahead, and was the scene of the historic duel between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr.

“When I was bound down last summer on the ‘Hopping Joe’ they had a ‘spieler’ aboard who told us more about the history of Blennerhassett in three minutes than I had learned in thirty years,” said the old gentleman, as he lit his pipe.

The odd name “Hopping Joe” caught our ear, so we asked if that was really the boat’s name.

“No—oh no—that’s just the roustabout nickname for the ‘Joe Fowler’—she’s fast—makes hopping good speed, see? The black fellers have their own little jokes with the names of white folks’s steamboats. Now, there’s the ‘Tacoma,’ for instance; she’s the ‘Tack-hammer’ with them darky jokesters.”

And so even the hard-worked roustabout must

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have his little friendly joke about the river boats!

We now entered a straight seven-mile stretch of river which we were told ran right up to Parkersburg. As we did so, we found ourselves looking at the lower tip of Blennerhassett—long name—long island, being five miles long.

A picturesquely wooded ridge on the West Virginia shore makes a pleasant background for the island, especially at the point where the Blennerhassett mansion stands embowered in majestic trees. Aaron Burr during his sojourn there had persuaded Blennerhassett to dig a canal in the sedgy flats at the upper end of the island and use it for a winter harbour.

This story about the canal and one about the historic duel is as much as the river-men can impart in regard to the island's history.

There has evidently been very little written about Blennerhassett Island. The only book we ever saw is one we found, two years after our trip, while idly looking over the shelves of a tiny library in a Spanish Mission village of California. The unexpected discovery somewhat startled the Chronicler; for he was then writing the Pomeroy section of this very chapter.

"Blennerhassett" by one C. F. Pidgin is a sort of historical romance and bears the date of 1901, and the imprint of a Boston publisher,

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C. M. Clark. On page 26, the fourth chapter opens with a description of the place as it was about A.D. 1800.

We quote: "Harmon Blennerhassett was a highly cultivated gentleman and a member of a very wealthy Irish family. His wife, too, was a lady of high degree and was an English-woman."

In the coming time more may be written about it; but the island will always draw its romantic glamour from the extraordinary careers of the two early American statesmen who duelled there to the death of one of them—Hamilton!

We reached Parkersburg about noon, and found it quite the liveliest place that we had seen so far in West Virginia. Here the river widens for a few miles below and above; here, it has an island just above and another just below!

The town was chiefly interesting to us, because it was, so to speak, the home of the Little Kanawha. The "little" proved to be less than half as wide as the "big." It slips easily into the Ohio along the foot of a steep wooded ridge, under the shelter of which the older part of the town was built.

The bridges that spring across the little river have to leap quite high to reach the cliff-like terraces of the older part of town, the newer part being on an old flood-plain far below.

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The public landing is just a few rods up the Kanawha from the Ohio, and the view, looking up under the high-flung bridges from our steamer's deck, was quite impressive. Under the bridges, too, is a sheltered harbour for the numerous small steamers and launches of the "mosquito fleet." These swift little craft are used in the heavy trade, carried on here, in building-sand and also in ferry service across the mile-wide river.

It is at Parkersburg, too, that the Baltimore & Ohio Railway reaches the Ohio River from Baltimore at the head of Chesapeake Bay.

Just above the mouth of the Little Kanawha, the railroad is carried across the great stream on a bridge of many, many piers (suggestive of gigantic stepping-stones) and lands its trains at Belpre.

This Ohio River town is the namesake of a place in the English shire of Derby. The name is probably Norman French, and was, no doubt, substituted by William the Conqueror for the original Saxon name, since the pronunciation of most Saxon names must have stiffened the more nimble tongues of the rapid-speaking Normans.

By climbing the dam back at Belleville, the "Bobbie Dunne" had actually gained a little on her outraged schedule. This bit of encouragement caused the faithful roustabouts to handle



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their Parkersburg freight so fast that the sailing whistle caught us five blocks away with a half-eaten lunch in a crowded café. We were still breathlessly laughing and chewing on our desert when we clattered over the gang-plank. In a few minutes our boat was passing under the "stepping-stone" bridge and putting her "best foot foremost" for the ten-mile run to Marietta.

This pleasantly located and interesting old river port is said to be the oldest town west of the Alleghanies. It began existence as a frontier post, named Fort Harmon, at the mouth of the Big Muskingum, there being at that place, as at Point Pleasant, a stragetic "Point Confluence."

We were glad to be told that we could have about an hour ashore, so we set off with the usual feeling of pleasant anticipation which was one of the real joys of our river trip.

We went first to that famous relic of the Mound Builders—the Mound—a cone-shaped grassy hillock about fifty feet high. It stands in a spacious tree-shaded cemetery and crowns a gentle ridge that, apparently, divides the watersheds of the two Muskingums. Many of the streets are beautified by vine-covered homes and shaded with noble old trees. There is a dam near the mouth of the river, making the quiet lake-like waters of the Big Muskingum constitute the chief charm of a delightful park. This

## POINT PLEASANT TO MARIETTA

stretched for a goodly length along the eastern bank of the smoothly flowing stream.

We returned to the waterfront. There we found a stocky little monument erected in honor of the pioneers of Marietta. While the artists were reading the inscription, the Pathfinder "snapped" them, with a view of the river-confluence just beyond. In the finished print we found that both artists and monument loomed large and dark (almost sinister!) against the evening sky. Some days later when shown the photograph, our big man removed his glasses, polished them carefully, replaced them, looked at the photograph again, and remarked with an amused smile: "When you show this snapshot back in San Francisco, Billabdy, I'm afraid you will have to explain, to all enquiring friends, which is the monument and which is *me*—I loom up like the back of a hack!"

Down by the landing there is the usual row of old brick buildings. From one of them, a fried-fish restaurant, there floated out on the evening air such a delectable odour that the Pathfinder had to purchase some of the savoury food, in order to allay the alarming nose-twitchings of his food-sensitive companions! The fish were from the local rivers and quite delicious; they were apparently quite plentiful, too, for even the three of us could not eat all of the huge

## ON THE OHIO

amount which we had bought for thirty cents. We were glad to be told, by the mate, of two hungry ex-soldiers (who were travelling "deck passage" to Wheeling to re-enlist), and we gave the balance of the bread and the fish to them.

The "Bobbie" left the landing just as the first lights of evening twinkled and glowed in streets and shops. From mid-stream, the town looked warm, well-fed and homelike.

Marietta would make a delightful and convenient headquarters for a painter sketching along that part of the Ohio; it is also quite interesting in itself—this charming old

### *Capital of Musking—dom.*

O, American artists of the Eastern States! why not miss a summer in Maine, now and then, and sketch, instead, along the wonderfully paintable waterways that flow through the heart of our vast continent?

## CHAPTER XI

### *Marietta to Wheeling*

Lost!—A Wharfboat—Odd Names of Places—Coal Veins Visible in River-side Cliffs—We Enter the Steel Kingdom of Carnegie.

THE light-glow from Marietta still bloomed softly against the evening sky when we returned to the deck. Soon a wooded point shut out the pleasing sight, so we settled ourselves in our favourite corner by the smokestacks for a quiet chat about the doings of the day—*our* day—the river day.

We found, on comparing notes, that all of us had very much liked the comfortable and venerable Mother-Port of the Ohio, whose harbour lights had now faded far astern.

Presently, the old pilot strolled along and asked if he might have a smoke and a yarn with us. The genial old man was *always* welcome.

“Did you take note o’ the ‘Betsy Ann’ coming in, as we cast off at Marietta?—old boat of mine.”

Yes, we had.

Then he told us much more about the interesting names given to boats for loving memory,

## ON THE OHIO

for admiration, for good omen—for history. Two more nicknames came to his mind. He told us that our first boat, the “Stacker Lee,” was also known as “The Big Smoke”; and that the “James Lee”—a fast mailboat—received a compliment on her speed by the sobriquet of “Walking Jim.” While we had the old man in a reminiscent mood, we asked him to please clear up in our minds *just what was the “texas”* on an American river boat.

The old man smiled, as he removed his pipe a moment, while he expectorated over the rail. Then:

“’Tain’t surprisin’ that shore folks gets mixed up about it an’ thinks it’s the pilot’s place, ’cause the ‘texas’ is right close to it. The ‘texas’ is the little cabin you see jined up to and usually a little lower than the pilot-house—it’s the sleeping quarters for the pilots.”

“Thanks—but *why* a ‘texas’?” persisted the Pathfinder, as the old man was relighting his pipe.

“Oh—that—well, it’s kinda interestin’ how that name got stuck onto it. You see, in the early days o’ steamboatin’ all the cabins was named after States—that’s where the name ‘stateroom’ comes from, see? Well, there was a bright young feller in the Mississippi country who had designed some right speedy boats, so when he got

## MARIETTA TO WHEELING

a contract to build an extra smart and fancy packet—the ‘Kate Barnesdale’ was her name—he tried somethin’ new. It was a little deck-house just behind the pilot—the idea being to provide more sleeping room for passengers. Well, he didn’t know what to name the new contraption; but it so happened that the boat went into commission on the very day the State of Texas was admitted into the Union; so the new cabin was named the ‘texas.’”

We were really so grateful for the information that Daddy Twain was dissuaded from lighting his pipe again, and was offered instead a cigar by the Painter Man.

The boat now began such a bellowing with her whistle, that our fatherly old “River Dictionary” ventured a guess that we were goin’ to make a landing at Newport. The engines stopped and we drifted in towards the bank. Hazily we saw through the mist-paled moonlight that there was quite a fleet of steamers tied up near the landing. Between the boats was an open space on the shore; but *where* was the wharf building?

“Can you make out the wharfboat, Mr. Bell?—*I can’t*,” called out the pilot to the mate.

“No—o, sir,” peering with a strained irritation in his voice and pose; “looks like somebody musta stole it—I’ll be d——d if I can see it!”

## ON THE OHIO

And no wonder, for the wharfboat had been torn from its moorings and carried downstream by a runaway steamer just a few hours before!

This was now all being explained to us by invisible shouters who laughed and bantered us, while they waved flickering lanterns with comically useless gestures by way of emphasis. So, poor "Bobbie," not finding here the familiar "wayside inn" whereat to rest her tired wheel, flapped wearily on upstream.

By now it was nearly bedtime, so we started to go below, saying "good-night" to the mate as we passed him, standing at his favourite "look-out" at the foot of the forward flagstaff.

"Shucks, don't turn in yet," he said, swinging 'round, "we'll soon be at another landing—St. Mary's. *An'* from there on is a fine, straight piece of river for twenty miles or more. . . . A breeze is springin' up—it will blow away this scum in the sky, and we'll have *real* moonlight. *That,*" cocking up a scornful eye at the sickly moon—" *that* is about as much use as a 'tallow dip' to a lookout man."

We compromised by saying that we would go down and enjoy the cabin's warmth and there await the clearing of the moon.

In the cabin we found the old pilot sitting by the stove and spinning interesting yarns about the river. Presently the conversation turned to

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the subject of the odd names given to places on and near the river; the name of the next landing, St. Mary's, having started the discussion.

The beautiful, long and straight "reach" of river we were now entering had been honoured, on its lower West Virginia end, by a village taking the name of "Longreach." On the Ohio side, a little farther up, were two villages about six miles apart. One, evidently proud of its view of the lovely length of river, had called itself "Grand View"; the other one, perhaps the younger, not to be entirely *outviewed* by its rival, forthwith took the name of "*Center View*"! *Viewed* from *our* standpoint, this was quite amusing.

The other mate, who joined our little circle, then told us that, up in the country back of Marietta, the pioneers seemed to have named towns after members of families. One was "Hiramsburg," another "Oliver"; still another was "Hattiesburg," and, above all, one was "Sarahsville"! On hearing the latter name, Daddy Twain said roguishly, "I'll bet that's the place where that 'stone was raised to keep poor Sarah down.'"

The old gentleman's remark was prompted by his sudden recollection of a rather celebrated epitaph that was the gossip of that region some



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thirty years previous. It would seem that "Sarah" had been a trifle shrewish, for here is the epitaph:

To the Memory of

---

*SARAH DASH*

This stone was raised by Sarah's lord—  
Not Sarah's virtues to record—  
But to keep poor Sarah down!

After a laugh at "Sarah's" expense, the topic of peculiar names was resumed. "Horseneck," "Wasp" and "Sistersville" were little towns on or near the river along the West Virginia side. "Sistersville" was one of our landings, and is said to have one of the largest gasoline refineries in the United States.

The fog held off till past midnight, but even then the "Bobbie" was kept going by creeping cautiously along the bank from landing to landing. There was less risk in this than might appear, for the straight stretch of river reduced the danger.

Some time just before dawn, we were awakened by the uncanny silence which always followed the stilled machinery. "Bobbie" had been compelled to tie up at last. We sought sleep again—but it only came in broken snatches, for the unusual sound of a fog horn that approached and receded every few minutes disturbed us

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wretchedly. It was both mystifying and annoying!

When we went on deck at seven-thirty, we saw through the lifting fog the hull of a ferryboat disappearing into the mist.

"Ah!" said the Pathfinder, "we've been tied up near some all-night ferry, I'll bet!"

"You win," said the Painter Man, pointing to the signboard on the wharfboat:

### HANNIBAL—FERRY

On our return to the deck after breakfast, there were no signs of freight being handled, nor were there any visible in the wharfboat or on the bank.

"Where's all your 'hurry, hurry' of yesterday?" we asked the mate, whom we found leisurely puffing at his pipe.

"Oh, we're waiting for some blankety-blank special freight—chemicals—and the wagon that's haulin' it got ditched about a mile up there, in them woods."

"Woods" was right, for the place was very pleasantly woodsy; the trees, and a team of horses hitched under them, making the scene quite paintable. The Painter Lady, perceiving this, sat down forthwith to make a sketch in water colour.

Meanwhile her companions, accompanied by the mate, went ashore and up to a cider-mill, whose

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droning burr and sweetish odour floated down to the boat quite distinctly. The cider proved to be excellent, and for ten cents we bought two quart bottles of it.

Returning to the boat, we caught sight of the artist sketching on the upper deck, and straightway we assumed extravagant rollings and staggerings—each brandishing aloft his bottle of apple cider the while. For a moment Mrs. Pathfinder appeared to be in rather startled dismay; then tossing her head in mock scorn, she called out:

“What a sorry lot of rollicking roysterers! You are only ‘pikers,’ if you are bowled over by new cider!”

The steamboat people, all grumpy a moment before, were now laughing at the little comedy being played by the Californians. In the midst of the merriment came a great cracking of whips, and a six-horse team came into view bringing the belated freight.

Quite a fleet of small boats and launches were moving about the vicinity of the ferry; long, narrow boats were being “poled” or “punted” *à la* Thames. The action of the punter’s body was lithe and graceful, and had a slow dignity of motion that reminded us of a Venetian gondolier. With a tense, almost ecstatic joy (and a bit of charcoal) our figure painter sketched

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them in rapidly—caught every one of them with a swift, grasping greed that we told him was positively indecent! But the hardened sinner just grinned at us and mumbled for more sharpened charcoal. We gave it to him and, leaving the unrepentant one hard at work, went to the other side of the boat to watch the punters coming in. We soon observed them passing up and down close to the shore, but not *crossing* the river. Evidently, it was considered rather hazardous for that type of boat to attempt.

There was also a shrieky little launch—emitting a perfectly villainous odour of gasoline—that glided like a saucy duck between the ferry and a little town across the river. We had scarcely noticed the village, until once, when the launch had started to emit its smell and its shriek, a fat man stumbled hurriedly down to the water's edge and squeaked wheezily: "Hey, *I'm* going to Fanlight!" The obliging little water bantam put back and took the *Fanlight*-er and his "*bay-window*" across the river.

"I'll bet you put *that* name on your little list," laughed the old pilot, who had strolled up.

"Can you blame me?" smiled the Pathfinder, closing his note-book.

"No, and here's one or two more that may interest you. . . . Over and back o' Fanlight there's 'Maud,' 'Minnie,' 'Marion,' and——"

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The Pathfinder interrupted with a warning finger: "Shu-sh—ush! I'm a respectable married man—don't come around trying to interest me in your Mauds and Marions. . . . You, at your age, too. . . . Shame on you, Daddy Twain!"

"As I was a-goin' to say," chuckled the old man, "and another, not so *near*, is '*Far*.'"

How the old river-man did enjoy his carefully prepared "shot"! Surely, we as a nation *do* refresh our outlook on life with our sanity-saving humour!

"Far," it transpired, really was a place, and very properly, not so *near* as the others, being up on a little stream that joined the Ohio a little further down.

Hannibal Ferry, though it is on the north side of the river, is practically at the point where "Mason and Dixon's line," in its straight drive due west, from near the top of Chesapeake Bay, should have struck the south bank of the Ohio. That point on the river is Pennsylvania's most sensible western boundary, but the ridiculous "Panhandle" strip of West Virginia stops the famous line short of its proper objective by thirteen miles—a truly unlucky "baker's dozen."

The last of the fog was writhing and swirling along the river surface with those strange little wisps of steamlike vapour, when the "Bobbie" pushed herself out from the bank and started

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on another day's voyage. An hour later the sun came out and threw a curious shadow from our boat. Everything on the upper deck—smokestacks and flagstaffs, and even our three bodies leaning over the rail to watch the shadow effect—made a weird, progressing image upon the smooth surface of the water. We took a photograph which successfully reproduced all the shadows but our own. Too bad! We were disappointed.

The interesting sight followed us for half an hour or so, recording every shovelful of coal thrown on the fires, for the resultant smoke was instantly shown as a shadow, as it poured backward from the stacks.

By early afternoon our boat was tying up at a quaint little landing named "Clarington." It was on the Ohio side, and though there for only an hour, we saw several subjects suitable for sketching.

It happened to be the Painter Man's birthday; so while he sketched a Colonial house with a ragged boy dancing joyously around a blue-smoked bonfire in front of it, Mr. and Mrs. Pathfinder ransacked the village grocery for some dainty with which to embellish a birthday "tea." But ginger snaps were the only luxury (?) that the funny old shop could supply! However, the remaining bottle of cider "toned in" so nicely that we made merry quite successfully.

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While we sat in a little round pavilion on the bank, munching the crackers and quaffing our cider, we laughed over an incident of a red napkin that had happened at lunch that day.

After leaving Pomeroy the boat's supply of clean napery had become exhausted. A fresh supply awaited her at Wheeling; but being long overdue at that place, all the linen was "in the wash," and the steward in a "stew"! Poor, worried soul—he had apologized at every meal for two whole days!

By noon of this particular day there had not been even a slightly soiled napkin available, the darky waiter (we strongly suspected him of being the dishwasher, too) explaining sheepishly that he had put a few in a bucket and tried to wash some for the lady, anyway; but that the attempt was a failure.

"Dat red, muddy watah made 'em look laik dey had done been washed in a slaughtah house," he said, comically disconsolate.

"Then am I to have nothing at all to wipe my fingers on?" demanded the lady with tragic annoyance, for she was eating corn on the cob.

Stung to resourcefulness by her words, the man stretched his long black arm across the table—whipped off a little, fringed, red napkin that decorously covered some hardened old sinners of cakes, and, with a see-I-have-mastered-the-situa-

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tion sort of flourish, folded it deftly and placed it beside her plate. As we left the table, still smiling, we saw that the incident was not quite closed; for—would you believe it?—the fellow solemnly and carefully smoothed out that napkin and replaced it, tenderly and respectfully, over the cakes again!!

When we cleared from Clarington and its shady trees, we found ourselves in the middle of a sultry, Indian-summer-like afternoon. Now and then a season-belated butterfly fluttered rather helplessly across our bows. Giant cosmos, as tall and colourful as any we had ever seen lifting their pretty faces to our own Californian sun, were still blooming in many of those West Virginian gardens—gardens that peeped with friendly eyes from the bank as we passed along on the smiling river below. Soon the landscape began to change—flattening out and losing the beauty of the autumn-coloured hills that had followed us nearly all the way from Hannibal ferry.

Along that part of the Ohio the scenery reminds one of the wooded foothills of the Catskills, where they roll in picturesque procession down to the banks of the “lordly Hudson.”

Moundsville, West Virginia, was coming next. Already we saw over the shaly bluffs of the point above, the murk and smoke of that city of the plain. The bluffs were on the Ohio side, and



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sloping back from their rocky edge were long rows of stalwart corn. Soon we passed close under the cliffs, and saw plainly many veins of brownish-black coal cropping out of them.

Around the bend pretty little parks appeared, being scattered all along the river's edge. Houseboats (one of them named "Halley's Comet") were anchored near the parks, and many a deserted platform was covered with whirling, scurrying autumn leaves, instead of summer dancers. To these leafy parks go many thousands of millhands during the sweltering heat of summer; for the distance from Wheeling and the industrial region centring there allows of a cool and restful ride by boat.

Moundsville, when it came into view, proved to be on a very wide and fertile-looking floodplain. In the city's centre rises what is said to be the largest of the mounds left by the now vanished race who built them. The tree-topped crest of the shapely eminence can be seen from the upper deck of any passing steamboat.

An hour later we were at Bellaire, Ohio, taking on many crates and packages, chiefly enamelled ware. Here began another industrial region, and it fairly throbbed with factories, mills and furnaces. It marked the end, indeed, of flowering cosmos, fluttering butterflies and autumn-tinted hills.

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Tw'as even so; at Bellaire and Wheeling (they are but a league apart) we entered a land of smoke and flame—of industry and enormous wealth—we were on the borders of the Steel Kingdom of Carnegie!

And yet, artists and lovers of the olden time though we were, we would not have missed, for worlds, that hideously interesting ninety miles of choky, sulphurous purgatory that lies between Bellaire, Ohio, and Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

On the bank at Bellaire, we saw signs of that strange poverty which suffers its keenest pangs in the centres of prosperity and wealth. Along the water's edge were women, boys and old men, armed with extra long-handled garden rakes, drawing forth from the river's bed the few lumps of fuel lost overboard during the process of "coaling" steamers.

It was at this landing that we observed the ferryboat "*Charon*" come sloshing into her slip. How very fitting—"Charon"—ferrying the poor souls who must toil in the flaming forges on either side of this very material river—"Styx"!

Our boat gorged herself disgracefully with freight before she seemed willing to leave Bellaire and waddle over to Wheeling. There, for some reason we could not then divine, she remained inactive—perhaps she was in a state of coma! After half an hour of this strange

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quietude, we sought out the mate for information.

“We’re waiting for our ‘wash.’” . . . (They had taken it back to the laundry.) “H——l of a note! . . . Mebbe, too, some patent medicine hucksters will come aboard with their horses and spring wagons. . . . We’ll be here a good forty minutes yet. Go ashore and size up the town—it’s right smart of a city.”

So we ran across the gang-plank; laughed as we stumbled up the boulder-paved levee and—entered the busy streets.

## CHAPTER XII

### *Wheeling to Pittsburg*

Steam-boating Yarns by the Old Pilot—The Ex-Slave's Story—The Cradle of the Ohio.

BRIDGEPORT, Ohio, is the vis-à-vis of Wheeling, West Virginia; not only does the river separate them, but so do two other things: Wheeling Island and Prohibition!

The island is a large one, and besides serving as the very substantial central pier-foundation for the two bridges, it also does duty as a driving park and State Fair Grounds.

"Wet" Ohio wickedly tantalizes "dry" Virginia by the display of enormous beer and whiskey signs—great signs which are easily read clear across the river.

The first few lights of evening already shone in front of the smart, prosperous-looking shops when we left the busy streets and reached the river again. We were longing for a "shore" dinner with its better food and appetizing service, but the boat was due to leave immediately; so we had to endure supper aboard. Oh, had we but known! Not a bit of the expected freight

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had reached the levee yet! We might just as well have stayed on the streets a little longer.

The freight arrived, however, soon after our return, and as we dined we heard the unmistakable sounds of its being hurriedly rushed aboard. Shouts, orders, songs and the ceaseless roll of hand trucks over the gang-plank, assailed our ears.

We had two comforting improvements with our meal that evening—clean linen and fresh vegetables.

After supper we discussed the “shanty-boats” on the Ohio.

Here, at Wheeling, we had noted a return to the straight-line roof, that we observed between Cairo and Portsmouth. Down on that part of the river the roof-lines of the house-like craft were stiff and expressionless—were so uncompromisingly ugly that they gave us a “pain” in the eye! But above Portsmouth, and up to Marietta, the roofs took on quite a *jaunty* pitch, and there was a touch of artistry in the saucy up-tilt that followed the dip at the eaves. They were painted in well-chosen colours, had pretty flower boxes, and even a sort of afternoon tea-arbour embellished many of them. These could really be classed with the houseboats of the Thames, and the cosy, colourful “arks” of San Francisco Bay.

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We were still in the midst of this discussion, when the old pilot hurried in and sat down to his supper. Despite his desire to eat while the food was at least warm, he listened with much interest to our conversation. Evidently, he wanted to join in the talk, but steamboat meals are served on time, and if one is even fifteen minutes late, the food is either sternly cold, or at best only miserably warm.

The table was now being rather ostentatiously cleared, so we rose and sat near the stove which the chilly October evening made quite welcome.

The old man soon came to us and began to tell of his visit across the river "to see an old friend and to get a drink." The two cronies had "steamboated" together up along the "Big Muddy"—the Missouri—in their early manhood and the visit seemed to have been given over to yarns about those Missouri experiences and also, it was evident, to frequent "toasts" to the same. For Daddy Twain was decidedly and delightfully "mellow" and in excellent "form" as a raconteur.

He brought forth from his pocket a long, carefully folded newspaper clipping whereon was a "Krazy Kat" cartoon.

"Captain Dash—my old pal—handed this to me to show to you folks when I told him about

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you. It's from a 'Frisco paper (we had already seen *that*, with surprise), and his California gran'-daughter sent it to him. It's a sure good one—look at it." We did.

"Krazy" and his diminutive friend "Ignatz" were depicted standing on the bank watching a fantastic looking stern-wheeler splash along.

"The Mississippi?" Krazy was repeating.

"Yep, the Father of Waters," Ignatz added.

Krazy was plainly puzzled.

"'Father'? Then wouldn't it be more p'lite to call him *Mister Sippi*?"

Whereupon Ignatz heaves at Krazy the usual brick.

The old pilot then went on to tell us of a certain steamer that had made history way up the Missouri—in the Montana country. The story had come to his friend in a letter from an old "crony" of theirs who still lived out in Missouri. The yarn was about that famous steamboat of the frontier—the gallant old "Far West," and described feelingly the fate of the sturdy packet, long since stranded and now being buried under the shifting sands of the lower Missouri.

We were told that it was the only steamboat that figured in the Indian wars on that remote frontier. The faithful old craft, then in her youth as it were, had carried the wounded troop-

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ers to safety from the historic battlefield where General Custer won his famous fight with the Indians of the upper Missouri.

When the story was finished, we told the old pilot that we thought "Far West" was a singularly appropriate name for such a boat; our great regret being that it could not have been preserved for posterity to see, in some safe harbour along the *middle* Missouri—at some river port of the former frontier—for instance, in the city of old St. "Joe" (St. Joseph).

Let us hope that *some* of the old boats of Yesterday—now fast disappearing—will be saved by the organized effort of the river folk; so that they may be placed on exhibition in some sort of river-museum that may be established—Tomorrow.

"Ain't it funny," the old man went on, after a moment's silence—"how gran'children sometimes takes after their gran'parents more'n their own father or mother? Now, there's that gran'-daughter o' the Captain's that's out in California—she's plumb crazy about boats. Her daddy bought her a little sloop yacht an' one o' them arks like you wuz tellin' about, an' she sails 'round San Francisco Bay in the worst kind o' weather; but her paw—shucks—*he* couldn't sail a washtub! . . . Then, there's my own gran'-child, boy of twelve or so; *he* ran away from



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home because he wanted to go and be a pilot on the Sangamon River like Abe Lincoln, so that afterwards he could be 'a martyred President,' as he told his 'pop' later. . . . Did you ever hear about Abraham Lincoln havin' been a steamboat pilot onct? He *was* all right . . . time he lived in Illinois—he wasn't allus a-splittin' rails.

"Well, this young 'cub' of a gran'son o' mine was caught about thirty or forty miles from home by the police. His daddy telegraphed to me an' said, 'Have found Sammy—am goin' to fetch 'im home and lick him good.' Now, I knew *that* wouldn't do no good, so I up an' wired back quick: 'No use to lick the kid; reason with 'im; tell him gran'pa says pilotin' ain't as easy as it looks—an' another thing, he's been a pilot for over forty years and *he* ain't 'a martyred President' *yet*.'"

The old man stopped for breath and to mop his shaggy brows.

Sounds coming from the lower deck indicated that the last of the freight was coming aboard. We always liked to see the boat cast off from a landing, so we started to go outside. The old gentleman put out a detaining hand.

"Just one more yarn—it's about the Missouri, too, and will interest you-all—listen: Now, Cap'n Dash don't like it up here in this smoky corner

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of the country, so he's goin' to live in Marietta—goin' to move back into his own house, now the tenants are leavin'—an' he says to tell you that if you pass that way again, you're to be sure to hunt him up, and he'll spin yarns for you to a 'fare-ye-well'. . . . Got plenty o' room in his house to board and lodge all hands, he says. . . . Poor old Cap! he's just as generous as he was when he had a big plenty. He was rich once—owned a whole little town, 'way up on the Missouri . . . had a 'jim dandy' landing for steamboats and everything.

"One spring a roaring big freshet came a-boomin' down the river from up Nebraska way—I reckon it was the Platte that caught a cloud-burst—and when Jim left his poor little town a year later, it was as dead as a door-nail; for, would you believe it, Jim's landing was three and a half miles back from the river!\* *That's the Missouri for ye!* . . . an' that wasn't all—'long come a farmer from up on the Iowa shore an' sez to Jim:

"'Hey, you got my farm out there in front o' your landin'. I'm going to sue you for riparian rights!'

"'Sue, and be d——d,' sez Jim, gettin' his dander up—'if you do, I'll sue you back for un-

\* We read a year later of the death of this town's founder,—the old pilot's friend, presumably.—AUTHOR.

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lawful blockade. How can any steamboat get to my landin' with your dad-rapped old farm blockin' the channel?'"

Our lovable old rascal now went into a mild paroxysm of choky, coughing laughter. So we escaped, laughing heartily ourselves. When we reached the deck the "Bobbie" was already swinging away from the brightly lighted line of modern buildings that stand on the top of the levee at Wheeling.

We soon passed under the lamplit bridges; one of them being a suspension, with a well-planned, sweeping reach.

Blast furnaces and steel pipe-mills sent smoke and flame against the darkening sky; while, both up and down the river, its placid surface reflected dull red glows from a score of busy foundries. The stream was narrowing now, and seemed to be about two city blocks wide. Soot and cinders polluted it from bank to bank, as each leaping flame from the riverside furnaces pitilessly betrayed. After half an hour or so, the air grew too raw, too chilly and too sooty for the Painter Lady, so she went below, leaving her companions to enjoy a "stag party" with some of the rather noisy young patent medicine "spielers" who had come aboard.

When the Californians finally went below, they found Daddy Twain fast asleep in a chair; he

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was in a nasty draft, too, every time the door to the outer deck was opened. The excitement-wearied old man was "dead to the world," as a young pilot, who now came in, expressed it. The latter threw his overcoat on the shoulders of the old fellow, and asked the steward to unlock poor Daddy's stateroom. We all helped him to his feet, got him into his bunk and tucked him between the blankets tenderly, as if we were sensitive-fingered women instead of heavy-fisted men.

Mr. Pathfinder found his "better half" in her stateroom still complaining of the cold; she could not get her feet warm. The Pathfinder pondered a moment and then bethought him to go down to the boiler-room and look for a warm piece of iron or a hot brick.

In that search for a hot brick, he fell upon an Experience. All was quiet below. The tired roustabouts were lying around in twos and threes, as close to the warmth of the boilers as they could get. The semi-gloom here was in strong contrast to the adjoining engine-room, where all was alive with light and movement. A quick, blinding red glow from a suddenly opened fire-box door showed, in startling silhouette, the lonely figure of a fireman shovelling coal into the greedy furnace. The man stooped lower and the glare fell full on his face. 'Twas an ancient darky!

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Being no more able to find a warm brick than to discover the Golden Fleece, the searcher addressed the fireman. The latter had now closed the fire-door and the place was plunged into a darkness that fairly stunned.

"A hot brick, sah? No, sah, Kurnel—that is—(hesitatingly) there ain't none that doan't belong to *somebody* or 'nother."

Here he snapped on an electric light.

"What you want to do with it, sah?"

The Pathfinder explained, the while noting the gentle, fine old face of the darky, who would have made a really wonderful "Uncle Tom."

"All right, sah, I'll tell you what we'll do—you shall have the loan of my pardner's coffee brick—but he gotta have it back by early mawn-in', sah, 'cos he biles his coffee on it—an' he comes on watch at six."

On being promised that the precious brick would be returned in an hour, the old darky opened the furnace door and threw in the brick.

Soon it was withdrawn, deftly dropped into a bucket of water to wash and cool it, and then handed to the gentleman, with a subtle little air of courtesy that was quite unusual.

"No, not a coppah, sah," as a silver coin was offered. "Just bring back the brick, sah—afore six."

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The hot brick performed miracles as a rapid foot-warmer; so, forty minutes later, the brick was returned. Then, though the hour was late, the Pathfinder began to draw from the old coloured fireman the latter's personal history.

What a time and what a place it was to hear that story! A story whose scene was so far removed from this midnight hour in a steamboat's fire-room! How different the waters of the pellucid river of *his* tale from the oily, dirty brown stream that now swashed and rippled against the "Bobbie's" beam. How different were the cotton and corn fields on the banks of *his* river and the fiery forges and towering chimneys on the banks of this!

"Well, uncle," we now began, "you seem to be rather old for this kind of work—how old are you?"

His kindly face, his gentle manner—the crisp, grey "wool" that stood out in tufts about his ears—all bespoke him as one of those patient darky philosophers so rarely seen nowadays.

He answered with a sigh: "I'm sixty-nine, sah, but I thank Ole Marse for givin' me the blessin' of health and strength to do this yer firin'—I shore am, sah; 'cause I warn't raised to hard field work like mos' slaves."

"Oh—so you were born a slave? . Where—in Virginia?"

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“Ye—es, sah, in Ole Virginia—do you-all know dat Virginia country?”

On being answered in the affirmative, he mentioned a plantation on a beautiful tributary of the James as his birthplace, and also the home of the distinguished Virginian family who had then owned the greater part of the fertile valley through which flowed a certain crystal-clear little river.

The fire now needed attention, for the “Bobbie” was “bucking” both wind and current. While the old darky shovelled the coal in steadily, we watched him with absorbed and sympathetic interest. The man’s refinement of manner, his quiet reference to not being “raised” to work in the fields, moved us to reason out that he had been a “house boy.”

When the fires were duly fed, and he sat near us, mopping his brow, we asked concerning our surmise. He smiled as he answered:

“I see you know Virginia all right—yes, sah, Kurnel, I was house boy until I went to wah.”

To war!—here was something unusual!

Before we could ask what regiment (*something* kept us from asking *which* army) he had served in, the cautious old diplomat looked keenly at his interviewer and hazarded:

“I know you-all’s not Southern—neither is you reg’lar Yankee—so I don’t mind ’fessin’ that I

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was a soldier for the South. I belonged to the—th Virginya. . . . I didn't fight f'r no Freedom. *I* fought for Marster and young Missus!" Here his voice choked and he fumbled at "coal dust" in his eyes. A silence followed, broken only by the throb of the distant engines. Then we said: "You must have been quite contented and happy on the old plantation—and very fond of young Missus?"

"I shore was—they done treated me like I was their own blood-child, 'most. And young Missus—why, sah, I was given ('long with my twin sister) to her when I was one yeah old and she was five"—again the "coal dust" "pestered" him. . . . "When I was badly wounded at 'Chief Mountain' she heard of it and got to me in four days. She 'tended me while Marster sent two field boys and an ox-wagon filled with straw to 'tote' me home. I was helpless nigh on three months. . . . I guess I *was* fond—after that!

"Well, after 'mancipation I done stayed on at the plantation awhile, 'till my white folks had to give up the old way o' livin'. Then they give me ten Yankee dollahs and told me to get north of the Ohio, where there was lots of work, good pay—an' 'freedom.' I bawled like a c'af and didn't want to go, but young Missus said I must—so I braced up and sed I would. She then told



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me she would let me write to her (*she* had teached me to read and write) and that if I was ever sick and likely to die, I was to let her know, and she would try to get to me. 'All right,' I said, 'but won't you please promise that if *you* get sick that-a-way, you'll send for *me*?'

"She tried to pr'tend she was cheerful, and she made a joke about lettin' me come an' be her pallbearer—it *was* a joke, 'cause, as she said, she was 'four great big years' older'n me—them was her very words, sah—and—and—(a struggle to choke down the lump in his throat)—she *did* die, and I *did* act as one of her pallbearers!"

The fires needed him again and, when we saw the heavy under lip of the African quivering in the glare of the open furnace, we turned away, filled with a great respect.

We looked out over the sleeping river at the smoke, at the flames—these, and the splashing paddles seemed a world apart—far apart—from that world of old Virginia pictured in the ex-slave's tale. He was soon back again and saying:

"When I got her despatch, I told my boss all about young Missus, and for all he was a pretty hard sort of a Yankee, he said for me to go right away—even asked me if I needed any money—and told me my job would be there for me when I came back. . . . We buried her

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over thirty years ago . . . but it only seems like yesterday. Nothin' — ain't—ever — happened—since! Leastways, not that *I* cares about."

His story was finished.

What a wonderful experience! We had gone forth in search of a hot brick—and found an Epic!!

Next morning was Sunday, and the fourth day of our voyage from Point Pleasant.

The breakfast table was alive with new faces that morning, for the patent-medicine men were out in full force. The old pilot was at the head of the table, bright and chipper, being engaged in conversation with a young man whose father he knew "when," etc., etc.

The fog cleared away by eight-thirty, and an hour later we were all on deck, basking in the warm sunshine. The river was noticeably narrower. The mate passed, bidding us a hearty "Good-morning."

"What time did we get the fog, Mr. Bell?" we asked.

"Long about one o'clock, but we kept a-goin' carefully till three—then it sure fogged up good an' plenty, believe *me*."

"Say, Captain Regan," addressing our old pilot, who sat near us, "while we were takin' on freight at Steubenville landing last night, the 'Kannoy' (this was the down-bound boat) come

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in there, too. An old pardner of yours hailed me, an' I told him you was aboard; he sez: 'Give 'im my regards and tell 'im I'm a-goin' to winter in Point Pleasant, along with the other old river craft.' "

"Much obliged, Mr. Bell, much obliged," said the old man as the mate moved away.

"That was Silas Rockford"—turning to us—"and he sure has had some experience on these rivers. He's an engineer—that is, he was—an' he's been blowed up with his boilers an' been quarantined with his boat. . . . Had his men a-dyin' all around him with 'Yaller Jack'; you know—yaller fever."

"Yellow fever, eh—down at New Orleans?" commented the Pathfinder, scenting an unusual story.

"No, sir—r!—right here on our own little old Ohio! It was down foot o' Raccoon Island, just below Gallipolis, an' 'long about 1878, I reckon. It was the steamer 'John Porter,' and Silas was makin' his first trip as engineer. Only two of the whole crew survived—Silas and the steward. . . . The sickness got on to the 'Porter' somewhere down towards New Orlins—at Baton Rouge, I think. . . . Silas was engineer o' *this* boat once when she was runnin' in the Cumberland River trade."

As we proceeded up-river, the collieries, roll-

## WHEELING TO PITTSBURG

ing-mills and sewer-pipe factories on the Ohio side seemed to pass as if on parade—a continuous procession of them. After a few miles of such scenes we hailed with pleasure the sight of extensive apple orchards. Apple orchards in that region! Yes, and it is just like the Ohio to hand you a surprise like that around some short bend—just when you least expect it, too. But there were the orchards—sturdy and flourishing young trees. The fruitful groves seemed to be heaving up and down on the wavelike slopes of the Virginian hills that rolled in rhythmic undulations above the red-brown river, now shining in the sun.

This apple country of the “Panhandle” is said to be quite famous, but it was all new to us. As the trees were comparatively young, it would seem that the winds do not bring the smoke and soot their way. For surely they would not have been planted if the forges and furnaces could have harmed them; and yet those factories must certainly have been in existence long before the trees *we* saw were planted.

The mate now ran hurriedly up from below and stood at the forward flagstaff, shouting orders to his men on the lower deck. Presently the creaking and squeaking of blocks and pulleys began, and lo, up into the air above the hurricane deck there heaved in sight a one-horse spring-

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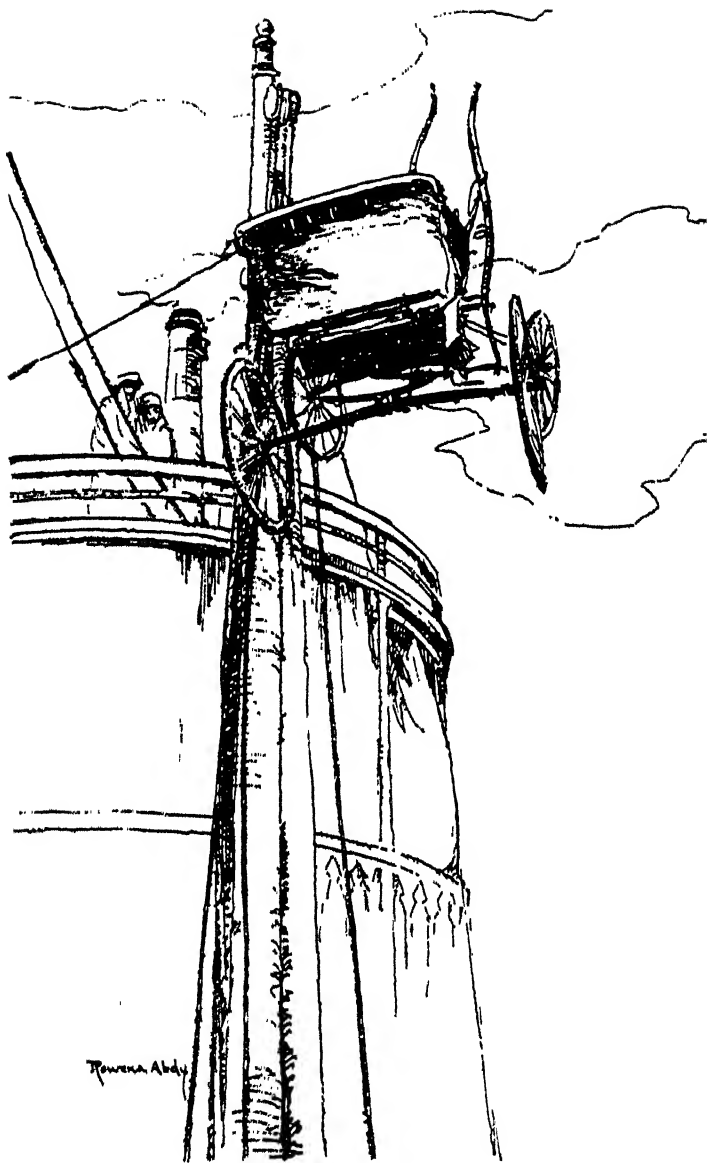
wagon! There it hung in mid-air, dangling and twisting at the end of the rope, as absurdly helpless as a straw-stuffed scarecrow!

We peered over the rail and saw several of its fellows minus wheels, minus shafts, tucked in corners and blocked away from the working space all over the boat. They almost amounted to an epidemic!

Evidently, the "Bobbie" had still been gorging freight, and the vehicle now suspended at the masthead had proved to be the last gulp, since there was no room for it on the cargo deck!

The Painter Man went below and photographed the ludicrous sight, while his friends looked down from the deck above and made merry!

By noon we were at New Cumberland, West Virginia. Here was a great dam and a lock. The river had lowered; so, as the boat could not climb the wickets this time, we locked through. The lock was one of the new units of the great modern system that the Government is installing all along the Ohio, in order to maintain nine feet of water at all seasons. We had already passed through some of the new ones, while we had gone around others still under construction. The night work on these afforded us weird sights of smoke and steam and clustered lights. The new locks cost about one million each, and are



FREIGHT—AT THE MASTHEAD!



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equipped with every modern improvement and convenience. In the latter may be included the splendid power houses, administrative offices and lock-tenders' quarters. These buildings are all well planned and well placed. Being constructed of the same stone, the whole effect is one of colour harmony, and a subdued strength bespeaks their establishment for all time.

While our boat was being "locked" through, we sketched and photographed a beautifully designed old stone house that stood near the bank, at the lock's lower end. It had three artistic doorways; the motif of the main floor being repeated in smaller doors, at the second and third floors;—for the house, unlike any other of its type that we saw along the river, had three stories. The façade of each floor was practically a replica of the others. The great door below centred on a very spacious porch; while the other doors were centred, each on smaller but very charming balconies above. Each upper story rose successively in reduced, yet well-sustained proportions. The colours were weather-toned greys, yellows and reds.

Once out of the lock, the "Bobbie" made such good speed through the slack water of the upper level that we were soon passing Yellow Creek. This little place on the Ohio side was the scene of the famous and furious personal combat be-



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tween "Big Foot," an Indian chief, and a white pioneer named Adam Poe.

Just above New Cumberland, where a vast level acreage of fertile land runs down to the river's edge, we saw, standing back from the bank, a noble old mansion. It was placed on ground that sloped gracefully and with wide spaciousness back from the river. Despite the thick screen of trees about the house and the writhing clouds of smoke from frequently passing locomotives that roared in its rear, the old house showed through, now and then, still proud and dignified.

It was the early Colonial home of the Arbuckles, known to *our* generation as purveyors of a famous brand of coffee.

When the first Arbuckles established themselves here, they were Virginian planters,—probably a sort of border guard for the Old Dominion, to watch the movements of their Puritan cousins passing down the Ohio, seeking sites for settlements further south.

By two o'clock the ex-slave was "on watch" again; so Mrs. Pathfinder and the Painter Man, who had been counting the hours until the time to see him came around, were taken below to the steamer's fire-room.

The coloured man's courtly ease of manner, and his evident enjoyment of the lady's call and

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her mission there (to thank him for the hot brick), proved his former close association with and careful training by the ladies of that Virginian household of whom he had spoken so feelingly.

"What was your young Missus like—tall and dark?" asked the Painter Lady.

"No, ma'am, she was fair—blue eyes—and plump as a pa'tridge. . . . But *you* have long slender hands and fingers like she had," stepping a little closer to look at the artist's hand resting on her husband's coat-sleeve. The old slave continued: "When we three chillun used to play together, it was always young Missus who unfastened knots or reached through tight little places to open gates and doors. . . . When she came back from studyin' music in Europe, she was mighty proud of her hands, 'cause the p'fessers done told her she had the fingers of a born pianner player. . . . I reckon you play, too, lady?"

"No, I only paint pictures," she replied as she bade him "good-bye."

"What a dear old darky!" she exclaimed on reaching the upper deck.

"Yes," assented the Painter Man, "it's almost worth the whole trip to be able to see such a fine old specimen of his type—at least, I *suppose* he is."

## WHEELING TO PITTSBURG

"Oh, I shall make a special place in my diary about meeting him," replied the Painter Lady.

On the upper side of the big bend above Yellow Creek, the Ohio turns decidedly more easterly, and heads straight for the Pennsylvania line. Just around that bend is East Liverpool, Ohio; the place is said to be the largest pottery town in the United States. As we approached, the late afternoon sun was sending long, slanting rays of dusty gold along the smooth, field-like spaces seen here and there about the town.

We hope that the good folk of East Liverpool will smile indulgently at us, if we feel roguishly moved to refer to their lively, bustling borough as one great "Potter's Field"!

East Liverpool smiles—that's good—"Let's shake!"

Around a short turn of the river, just above, we came upon a strangely isolated pottery on the Virginia shore. It stood on a broad bit of cape-like headland, and the high rampart-wall, surmounted by great turret-shaped kilns, suggested a *feudal castle* in-the-making more than a place of *crockery* in-the-making.

It is regrettable that unsightly piles and dumps of white clay "refuse" disfigure the bank and mark the site of most of the potteries bordering the river in this region.

As the sun's red disc touched its lower edge

## WHEELING TO PITTSBURG

to the orchard-crested hills behind us, we turned another short bend and crossed over the western boundary line and into Pennsylvania,—“just as the sun went down.”

We were now only forty miles from our voyage's end—Pittsburg.

A narrow, notch-like opening in the woods which crowned the lofty slope above the south bank of the river was pointed out to us as the place where the line coming up from its starting-point, down on the “Mason and Dixon,” reaches the Ohio and springs across it. Continuing its due north course, it runs straight away to the southern shore of broad Lake Erie. A glance at the map up and down the northern portion of that western boundary reveals a desire on the part of the early settlers of the Pennsylvania side to commemorate the running of said line. The names of one or two places show this: There is “Penn Line,” “Ohioville” and “Linesville.” All these are on the Pennsylvania side;—Ohio has not a word to say on the subject! Was Ohio “peevish” about that boundary?

Immediately inside the State line we made a landing at Georgetown. Here we took on a lot of tall, odd-shaped and roughly fashioned tubs of—hold your nose!—limburger cheese! While this freight was being taken on, two fine, large oxen, yoked to a great cumbersome wagon, meekly

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awaited their turn to come on board. But when all was ready for them and the straining beasts had plodded (with evident trepidation) along that fearsome gang-plank, and were about to step to the deck, the sensible creatures stood stock-still. Nor whacks, nor prods, nor curses loud and deep, budged them a "barleycorn"!

"What's the matter with 'em?" called out a man standing near us and looking down over the rail like ourselves.

The young mate looked up between "whacks" and grinned:

"I reckon they've got a whiff o' that limburger."

So did we, then, and leaned far back to keep out of the "line of fire" that shot up to our nostrils from the cheese below.

A lofty hill now sought to bar our progress, but, pretending not to notice, we slipped around its impudent point and went serenely on. Rounding the sharp turn, our gallant "Bobbie" found a "lady in distress"—an overloaded towboat, pushing pluckily, but with evidently failing strength, against the trying currents of the river. He ran up to her and shouldered her along for five minutes until she got her barges clear of the curve.

Withdrawing his helping hand, the "Bobbie" now pushed away on his own course. Soon we left

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the tow well astern; it made a dramatic silhouette against the saffron sky, now after-glowing from the sunset. Behind the twin black columns of her smoke, there uprose straight from the water's edge the high wooded hill that caused the bend. This ridge cut off the lower rays of the sky's light from our eyes and let down all about us a strange calm light from overhead; it settled softly on the broad still surface of the water and changed it from a river of dirty brown into a glorious lake of ambered red. In the middle of it floated the long black line of the barges and the higher bulk of their push-boat, which, roaring gently, was drawing echoes from the hill-bound shore.

The Pathfinder was sent post-haste to the stateroom for the sketch box, and soon the Painter Lady sat down, all in a gentle ecstasy, to place the scene on canvas. We sat in silence and watched her. Becoming quite absorbed in this, we did not know of the purser's presence until he tiptoed close up to see us and sat quietly down with just a nod and friendly smile.

Presently, the Painter said: "It's all right now, you may talk. . . . Thank you."

But we were in no hurry; the purser and the Painter Man puffed quietly at their after-dinner cigars, while the Chronicler recorded the scene in his memory.

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The painting ceased. The artist straightened her tensed back, studying her canvas critically. "I think I've got about all I can,—it's nearly dark now," she remarked with a sigh of relief.

The purser threw away his cigar and, first asking permission, stepped over to look at the sketch. He was a bright young Kentuckian, was this "ship's husband" (as the "deep sea" people say), and from him we had learned much statistical knowledge of matters pertaining to the river.

He seemed quite delighted with the picture; and looking up, he remarked:

"Honest, I'm sure glad that you considered it worth sketching. I have always said that artists ought to come and get scenes along this river. Now, that I have actually seen a picture painted here, I feel that I had the right idea; but I've often wondered if I wasn't, maybe, too kinder romantic, don't you know?" This, with a shy, boyish smile. Continuing, he grew more animated and positive.

"I tell you what, though, we are going to miss these big, high old towboats and long, three-deck passenger packets with their flopping old stern wheels,—when they're gone . . . boatyards are not going to build many more of them. Everything is going to be this new tunnel-pro-

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pellor type—little, insignificant and ugly; but Lord Gawd, the *push* that's in 'em!"

Eagerly, we questioned him about this threatened New Dispensation, albeit our artist-hearts were troubled with thoughts of unwelcome news. But so it was, and what we were told on the throbbing stern of our sooty little steamer that evening made us doubly glad that we had come to study the river life before it changed forever. Verily, had we come at the, "eleventh hour."

The romantic chapter of the grand old passenger packets will close in a few short years. Even now the preface of a new one is being written by younger generations, wise in the newer mechanics of power production. These men have already developed a new type of boat, such as the purser had described. A tunnel-propeller had, in the course of experimentation, been sort of "sicc'd" on to a majestic old packet, and the powerful little brute, although already towing a barge, just simply pushed the other steadily back—back—even against the river's current—pushed it back relentlessly, while the plucky older boat fought furiously with wild splashings of her great wheel to thrust back the little black beast. But it could not; no,—not even with the current to help! In fact, so the records show, the lordly, but "game" old river king was quietly and



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irresistibly shoved upstream at the rate of eight miles an hour!

So much force in such small compass—such economy of engine metal and fuel—compelled even our admiration, though our hearts ached at the thought that our romantic old river would ere long float fleets of such unlovely craft.

The river's New Day which is coming is now being prepared for by magnificent dams. With them, quick-acting locks;—miles of almost currentless slack water; and a stream always rich and full from bank to bank,—nine good feet of easy water. Patent loading devices at important landings;—increase of business for the boats by diverting slow and bulky freights from the railways to the rivers,—such are the “coming events” that are “casting their shadows before.”

Through the gloaming we forged ahead into a region made more and more unlovely by the greater number of smoky factories. The ridge of low hills on the south bank would recede now and then, as if in horror, and leave behind a hideous acreage of marsh, overgrown with dirty brown grass. This swamp-land was serpentine by sluggish waterways, covered with an almost solid surface of soot, cinders and streaky oils.

Night had fallen by the time our steamer came abreast of Beaver Falls, a busy little town at the mouth of the Beaver. All we saw of the

## WHEELING TO PITTSBURG

place was a glitter of lights and the dark line of its river coming into the Ohio. Soon, it was too raw, too cold and too choky with smoke to stay on deck; so we went below. Settling themselves in the comfortable main cabin, the artists began packing up their sketches—Daddy Twain looking on with much interest.

An hour later the boat stopped,—we listened intently. No sounds of lowering gang-plank;—no rattle of racing hand-trucks. We had stopped for the night!

Soon the captain came in, threw off a heavy coat, smiled at his artist passengers and went over to look at the sketches.

“Well,” he said as he fingered them, “I’ve tied up here for the night. . . . It will be your last evening on board my boat. . . . Sure sorry to lose you; but it’s Pittsburg ‘for yours’ in the morning!”

We had stopped near Economy, Pennsylvania. It had a rather interesting history, so the old pilot told us. Months later we learned more about it. The place was settled about A.D. 1810 by a party of Germans who had left the Fatherland seeking freedom, to work out certain experiments in religion and government.

Landing penniless in Philadelphia, they had been befriended by William Penn’s English Quakers. The latter assisted the German colo-

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nists to settle on the farthest-flung border of the Quaker State—out there on the banks of the Ohio;—where our boat had anchored for the night.

Shortly after Daddy Twain's remarks about the landing's history, the Pathfinder and the Painter Man went out on deck and then over a footboard to the shore.

No lights, no landing-place; a brush-grown bank. It had an eerie, deserted look.

“‘This is no place for a minister's son,’” quoted the Pathfinder as drily as he could in such a *damp* atmosphere.

“Well, is it the place?” asked the Painter Lady when we re-entered the cabin.

“Oh—oh yes, it's ‘Economy’ all right,” answered her fellow-artist—“they're saving on everything. It is lightless, roadless and almost houseless.”

“What a place!—it must be also *useless!*” exclaimed the lady.

The latter had now finished packing the sketches and wished to be taken to the outer deck to say: “Good-night, O Friendly River and Shadowy Shore!”

This was a quaint little rite we performed almost every night—the Chronicler officiating as High Priest.

To-night the fog was sticky, smelly and satu-

## WHEELING TO PITTSBURG

rated with sulphurous fumes—the raw chill of it all being strangely penetrating. To us, shivering and coughing in that atmospheric abomination, these sights, sounds and smells seemed such a sordid and depressing end to our wonderful thousand miles of voyaging up this remarkable river.

Yet, it was the Ohio—the Ohio River *to-day*—the busy, beautiful stream that we had journeyed far to see and to study. To study and to record the same as best we could with brush, with camera and with pen.

“Do you think you could get that hot brick for me again to-night?” was the question which met the Chronicler when, an hour later, he entered the stateroom.

“My dear,” he replied with mock gravity, “if your bed were as full of hot bricks as my head is full of the notes I have been making——”

“Yes, and if your book of notes was in bed with that many hot bricks, it would be warm—which my poor feet are not. Go on, now, and don’t tease; get that dear old slave man to heat a brick for me.”

The Chronicler went down to the fire-room which much misgiving; for he knew that the old slave was “off watch.” He had even a doubt whether there would be much fire with the boat tied up, let alone the possibility that the other

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fireman might be surly and not care to heat the brick. There was not a soul in the fire-room! All was still and dark save for a dull red glow under one of the grates.

"What you want, Cap'n?" came a grumpy voice out of the corner by the door.

The quest for a hot brick was explained.

"Oh, yessah;"—a dark body sat up—a very tall, "raw-boned" type of African it proved to be when he switched on the light.

"I'd mos' done give you up, sah."

"Oh, were you expecting me?"

"Yessah; Mr. Cro'fud dun sed you-all might come again fo' dat brick agen, sah."

"Mr. Crawford?"—enquiringly.

"Yessah,—mah watch-mate—de odder cullud fireman."

We mused: "*Mister Crawford!*"—well, well—"*Mister Crawford!*"

After throwing the brick in the furnace, he went on: "Mah pardner shore *is* the white-heartedest black man in dis yer hull country—Kurnel!"

"I had a very interesting talk with your friend last night,—he was once a slave, wasn't he?" we said next.

The tall, gaunt African took a position with his back to the furnace and then answered slowly: "Yessah, Kurnel, he was;—*an' Ah was too.*"

## WHEELING TO PITTSBURG

Then, while the Chronicler was still trying to recover from his surprise, the fellow rumbled on, telling bits—unrelated bits—of his story.

He was born in the valley of the Kanawha, not far from Point Pleasant. He had been owned by the Sees—a family of turnpike builders. After the slaves were freed, his mother and sister, fascinated by stories of life “north” of the Ohio, persuaded him to take them to Gallipolis, so they could have their own home like “white folks.” This he did, but only remained three or four years, when he returned to his former master.

In a year or so, he went “back No’t’h” again. Two years later he once more trudged down the road to the old plantation. He kept this up for several years more. “Every time I was ‘busted’ I dun got homesick f’ ole master,” as the old darky naïvely expressed it.

On the occasion of these “prodigal son”-like returns of his ex-slave, the master would laugh and exclaim:

“What,—*you* here again,—you good-for-nothing rascal? . . . Go get a good meal—I’ll find you a bunk; and don’t you dare be late for work in the morning.”

Despite the comfort of a hot brick, and the need of tired eyes for sleep, our rest was broken—yes—splintered—by many sounds. With shriek and roar, the railway trains made the night

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hideous. Along both banks they ran; and, over a bridge, close overhead, they fairly *roared*—passing and repassing!

Oh, what a night! And thus was sleep withheld from us until the absolute weariness that comes with the deeper darkness just before the dawn settled soothingly on our vibrant nerves, and sweet rest was ours.

It was not the lure of breakfast which hurried us into our clothes the next morning, but the expected thrill of entering Pittsburg.

On deck we found a slowly thinning fog-murk; every few minutes this would be lighted up with an angry, dull red glow of blast-furnace flames suddenly released and as suddenly quenched.

We hurried below. After gulping down a cup of coffee, we reached the deck to find "Bobbie" just casting off and heading under the hated bridge.

Soon, on our left, we were quite surprised to see some rather nice riverside villas. We were told that this was Sewickley,—a suburban residence district.

What a place for a suburb! It was quickly passed, and Sewickley's pleasant waterfront gave way to the mills and foundries which now resumed their march along either bank, growing ever thicker in their ranks for the next five miles that we pushed slowly on upstream.



PITTSBURGH, PA. JUST BELOW THE BRIDGES THE OHIO IS BORN





## WHEELING TO PITTSBURG

Foundries, furnaces, rolling-mills;—tongues of red flame and bands of yellow glare. Streamers of densely black or sulphurous grey smoke rolled and boiled from the dizzy tops of sky-scraping chimneys! All these could be dimly seen in the fog-screened morning sunlight.

On the south bank we sensed, rather than saw, craggy cliffs towering up into the murk behind *still* more factories. A massed line of houses peered indistinctly through the smother from the edge of the cliffs above; their soot-stained windows blinking drearily in the feeble rays of the sunlight that filtered through that far, but not, as yet, to the river surface.

As the "Bobbie" rounded what proved to be the last bend of our whole trip, the sun, as if at the behest of a reception committee from the Chamber of Commerce, peeped forth boldly for a moment, and we saw with exciting suddenness two high steel bridges just ahead. We saw two rivers—a Twin Confluence, so to speak—and the direction of their coming and the straight out-flowing of their united waters formed a gigantic "Y," up the stem of which we were looking now with rapt attention.

From the left came the black-green waters of the Alleghany; from the right flowed the mud-yellowed Monongahela.

Just below the shadows of their respective

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bridges the friendly rivers mixed their different-coloured waters, and lo, the Ohio rolled forth, full-born! Born—rocked in the cradle of the gently whirling eddies,—and started on its long, long journey to the Sea!

THE END

## AFTERWORD

PITTSBURG is the *birthplace* of the *Ohio*!

The view from the cliffs above this spot where the Ohio begins should be known and shown to the rapidly increasing numbers of tourists and travelers who are "Seeing America First."

Pittsburg should buy a lot up there and erect thereon a view-platform with a bit of parking round about it. Probably very few people see the prospect, except the local "cliff-dwellers"; or, perhaps, exploring strangers like ourselves.

We ventured into vacant bluff-edge lots and unfenced backyards in order to find the best and *safest* place from which to enjoy the scene—for a misstep meant a broken body and a crashing death below.

Picking our way carefully through a rock-strewn lot that gave an unobstructed outlook over the city, we saw, far beneath, the piece of land that runs down between the converging rivers. This was another "Point Confluence,"—another strategic spot between two rivers;—a battle stage upon which Indian, French and British actors-militant had fought for supremacy.

But three minutes' stroll from either of the

## AFTERWORD

twin bridges will bring one to the stocky old British blockhouse, built of stone, now some three or four feet below the level of the surrounding buildings. This was the "Fort Pitt" that gave the name to the then British Pittsburg. But before the Britons came, it was Fort Du Quesne—French Pittsburg. And time was when countless tepees and campfires covered the open river-bordered space and Indian sentinels kept watch for hostile tribes who might approach by all three rivers.

Over that historic piece of land had flown the tricolour of France, the royal standard of Great Britain; and to-day our own fair Stars and Stripes float over it,—it is ours—"to have and to hold!"

That Point has made history!

Yes, strategic it was, not only in its military value to the rival nations struggling for the possession of the Great West, but also in one of the world's greatest movements in colonization. To that spot came many cavalcades of emigrants from eastern Pennsylvania; these travelled in their famous Conestoga wagons to this, the head of navigation on the great waterway. Far West-bound parties then embarked on rough, open rafts or long, leaky flatboats for the voyage down the Ohio.

It is still the place of embarkation; for about

## AFTERWORD

a block above the confluence, on the north bank of the Monongahela, is the steamboat levee.

There, at the moment of our viewing, lay moored our "Bobbie Dunne," and on the corner of the busy street above was a comfortable old steamboat men's hotel, where we had bidden "good-bye" to cheery old Daddy Twain.

History repeats itself—for even to-day some of America's most famous railways have their terminals in the vicinity of the old levee,—that old-time transfer point on the transportation routes of Yesterday. This is highly significant and has, no doubt, been a powerful factor in Pittsburg's prosperity.

A big, broad bridge overlooks the steamboat landing, and over it pass daily thousands of travellers and tourists going to and coming from the railway stations.

O heedless, hurrying tourists, bound yet farther into the Boundless West,—stop!—stop, if but for a few brief moments and gaze downstream from the railing of the bridge.

On that point below, pioneers—the fearless forebears of some of you—made—History.

From there some of them began a voyage of many weeks to old St. Louis,—that same St. Louis which *you* may reach by to-morrow morning's breakfast-time.

*They* ventured forth in their slow, crudely

## AFTERWORD

fashioned craft to prepare the way so that *you* might at a later day be whisked there overnight in sleeping-cars.

Tarry, oh, tarry,—if but for one hurried moment—from your Modern Rush; tarry, and respectfully apostrophize your sturdy forefathers in something of this thanksgiving spirit:

*Here's to you,—Brave Pathfinders and Stand-  
ard Bearers!—ye cheerful, two-fisted Masons who  
bullded the solid, simple foundations on which  
God's Kindliest  
and  
Greatest Nation  
is being  
Upreared!*











